

AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

FEBRUARY 24, 1940

WHO'S WHO

CARL J. RYAN is actively engaged in both the higher and the lower strata of education. At one and the same time he is Superintendent of Schools, Archdiocese of Cincinnati, and dean of Teachers College, Athenaeum of Ohio. Previously, he was a professor of St. Gregory Seminary, Cincinnati, O. The paradox he points so deftly in his article will be recognized as true by every logical educator. But the progressivists, scurrying from contradiction to contradiction, and the liberals, shying from every consistency, will find it too true to bother about. . . . HENRY C. WATTS came out of England a quarter of a century and more ago and discovered a congenial guide and friend in Father Paul. After the crowded years between then and now, Mr. Watts writes his *requiescat* over the grave of Friar Paul. . . . THE BOXHOLDER patiently continues to explain the maneuvers in the game of getting elected so as to elect a candidate who will finally, after more elections, be elected to live in the White House. It is a bit perplexing, this business of democracy, but it somehow manages to work in the end. . . . PAUL L. BLAKELY would like non-Catholics to consider with him what we are not doing for our children. . . . JOHN LAFARGE concludes the series of observations he has been propounding on the future of a peace in Europe. . . . DAVID GORDON affirms the absence of non-controversial matters in his essay on a poetess he reveres.

SIGRID UNDSET, next week, makes an urgent appeal in her article, just received from Norway, *Finland's Cause*.

THIS WEEK

COMMENT	534
GENERAL ARTICLES	
How They Deny in the College What They Affirm in the School.....	Carl J. Ryan 536
Paul James Francis, Peekskill's Poverello	Henry Watts 538
Primer for Voters: V: State Conventions	Boxholder 539
Religious Illiteracy in Our Public Schools	Paul L. Blakely 541
In Any United Europe, Religion Must Find a Place	John LaFarge 542
CHRONICLE	544
EDITORIALS	546
No Civil Service! . . . In Broken Fields . . . The Handy Gun . . . John Smith Must Tell All . . . The Haas Plan . . . At Our Doors . . . He Waits for Us.	
CORRESPONDENCE	549
LITERATURE AND ARTS	
To Alice Meynell: After Reading Her Frequently	David Gordon 551
BOOKS	REVIEWED BY 553
The Convent.....	Adrian Peyton
The Meaning of Marriage.....	John LaFarge
Common Sense Neutrality... ..	Daniel M. O'Connell
THEATRE	Elizabeth Jordan 558
FILMS	Thomas J. Fitzmorris 559
EVENTS	The Parader 560

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COMMENT

ONLY a year ago died the Pope of many titles, Pope of the Conciliation, Pope of Catholic Action, Pope of the Missions. He was more than all those titles. Something that cannot be condensed into a brief phrase, he was a Pope who to an extraordinary degree won his way into the esteem and personal love of countless millions throughout the world, Catholic and non-Catholic. Successful in so many great endeavors, his closing eyes yet looked on failure. One title he coveted with all the prayerful longing of heart and intellect, and that title was denied him. For all his gallant striving he was not the Pope of Peace, for a restless world made his reign one of intermittent warfare. Twice in his last tense year he offered his life for the peace of the world. The sacrifice, it would seem, was accepted, and yet there is no peace. Less than seven months after his death the fear that weighed on him more heavily than age and sickness became a reality. We who loved him must build him the memorial he would most want, a memorial of unceasing, confident prayer for a speedy, just and lasting peace, prayer that his successor may be what was denied to him to be—the Pope of Peace.

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TIME marched on, and finally caught up with the Vatican and Pope Pius XII. Photographers had the word to explore the 108 acres of the Vatican City State, to film the famed museums and the chapels and the monumental St. Peter's, all of ancient date, as well the modern radio station and railroad terminus, to go into the class rooms and the workshops, to click as the Swiss and other guards paraded by, to take close-ups of the Vatican personages, and, in a word, to take the Vatican out of itself and into the wide world. Certainly, one remarks, the photographers enjoyed inside privileges. But most of all, they captured His Holiness, the Pope. They show him with his magnetic charm, whether he chats informally or moves about democratically or presides majestically; they portray, as well as men with cameras can, his humility and his sanctity; they present him as the most powerful moral authority of the world, seeking to bring peace to mankind; and they leave the memory of him as truly the Vicar of Christ. Heretofore, and on occasion, the March of Time may have made a slip. But the current film, "The Vatican of Pius XII," so authentic and so reverent, wins our prolonged applause for the March of Time.

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WE have buried millions of gold bars in Kentucky, prehistorically known as the "dark and bloody ground." The next deposit, it is announced, will be a shipment from Russia, which unfortunately is today a "dark and bloody land." The world's finan-

ciars and economists are puzzled in regard to the future use of all the buried gold. This Review has not found the solution; but it offers a literary (not a financial) quotation as a battlecry for a Democratic or Republican candidate for President: "What good to you is a vast weight of silver and gold in the ground?" So speaks in Bk. I, Satire I, Line 41, the virile Roman satirist (B.C. 65), Horace.

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ISSUE is raised by a correspondent as to AMERICA'S use of *sabotage* as a verb in a Comment of February 3. Webster and Wagnall, says the correspondent, give it as a noun. For instance: "*Sabotage*: No. 1, scamped work. No. 2, malicious waste or destruction of an employer's property by workmen during labor troubles." In Soviet Russia, we may add, sabotage, or its Russian equivalent, means any failure of a thing to work which Joe Stalin says ought to work. All these are nouns. Well, our Comment writers have no fondness for using nouns as verbs, when a verb is handy. But this writer could think of no English verb to correspond to the noun. So he used a noun as a verb. He has now grown defiant, and asks whether this be treason to the English language. Do we not *ship* American materials to Russia (to be used against Finland)? Do we not *boot* the burglar downstairs? Do we not *foot* it when the gas gives out; and *hand* the garage man a check to pay for it? Don't we *eye* our neighbor who has bought a new car; and *pencil* our thoughts on our cuffs? Don't we *average* so many telephone calls per hour, and *figure* how much we shall pay for them? Food abroad is *rationed* and they *wolf* it down. The ill-housed shiver and *cycle* for warmth. If this be treason, we may have to *Patrick Henry* Webster and Wagnalls.

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CATHOLIC Labor Schools report increased enrolment for the second semester, and the credit for the increase belongs entirely to Catholic workingmen. There is nothing selfish in the enthusiasm of these men who sit on the benches of the Labor Schools. Sit on the benches is hardly the phrase, for during a fair portion of every period they are on their feet, bluntly questioning or vigorously discussing some practical point that seems at variance with the theories. "You said it was our school and we can say exactly what we think and ask any question we like?" And do they! They are proud of their new knowledge and their new confidence as they sneak a sidelong glance at an extended arm to see if the gesture is as graceful as it might be or as gawky as it feels. They are apostles in school and out, not expecting returns in dollars and cents, satisfied if in some small way they can help to bring

Catholic social principles to the solution of labor problems. They bring their non-Catholic fellow workers to the classroom and make no effort to conceal their pride in "showing off what the Church has to say about these things." They are so unselfishly generous in giving time and energy to a movement that may not show fruits for twenty or twenty-five years, they are so eager to learn Catholic doctrine on all the concerns of their life, that they are a trifle puzzled that Catholic employers are not clamoring for Catholic Employer Schools. Of course they never suspect the education and inspiration they give to any priest fortunate enough to share with them the work of the Labor Schools.

THE First Lady of the Land has won for herself no pleasant thoughts by her maternal solicitude for the leaders of the American Youth Congress. The country stands somewhat aghast at her nurturing of these superadult youth who misrepresent the real and the sound and sturdy young people of the nation. Lady Number One has apparently fallen under the fascination of these clever youthful politicians and seems to be deeply moved by all their antics. She is their power, they know, and hers is their might. Out of the dust, they realize, has she lifted them up to national publicity. Under her mantle, they shrewdly surmise, they can boo and hiss her husband, they can demand huge government subsidies, they can refuse to include Stalin among the dictators, they can proclaim Communist doctrines. Lady No. 1, having so tenderly mothered the Marxist-led American Youth Congress, must be held responsible for the future Marxists who, in a decade or two, will be striving to turn with violence our Congress into a Marxist assembly and to oust our then First Lady and Gentleman from the White House.

WHEN he wished to recreate his mind by turning from the vileness and pettiness of the earth, Ignatius Loyola used to raise his vision heavenward. We are not so sky conscious as our ancestors though, the heavens know, there is enough sorrow and discomfort left in the terrestrial sphere to turn our gaze upward. Yet there are some among us who make friends with the planets, keep track of the seasons by their flight in the firmament, and after a trip of some length find their bearings anew with an anxious glance heavenward. The last two weeks of February and the first of March present an unusual configuration. During the second half of the present month, the spectator will be able to follow the aligning of the visible planets, reaching its climax on February 28. Five planets visible to the eye will be in an almost straight line between the horizon and zenith, all in the same half of the heavens. If one casts his eyes on the western skies after sunset, from February 23 on, he will become conscious of the parade of Mars, Saturn, Venus, Jupiter and Mercury, in that order from zenith toward horizon, in a line slightly bent as it nears

the horizon. With the aid of a telescope the remaining planets appear in the same part of the sky. It is a phenomenon not repeated again in the life period of the present generation; an appropriate time to get acquainted with our neighbors and mark our first acquaintance with the magic of a planetarium.

LOOKING over the bookshelf of recent publications we notice that the bulk of the material issuing from the presses, excepting of course the ever-increasing list of fiction, has much to say—or little, depending on one's viewpoint—about the present state of affairs in the world. One book deals with how to keep us out of war; another, how to get us into it. One writer tells us what is wrong with Germany or Italy or England, while a prognosticator—and no time was ever riper for such—predicts that Hitler cannot last another six months. Several writers have essayed what is "blurbled" to be the one and only authoritative estimate of the genius, or lack of it, of Adolph Hitler. An author, more audacious than his fellow-craftsmen, if we are to judge by his pseudonym, dashes off a glib portrayal of the powers that direct the destinies of the British Empire. With so many illuminating statements and appraisals, our notions become more involved, and youth begins to reflect on what a mess their fathers and grandfathers made of things. In the midst of all this confusion it might not be out of place to suggest that youth and old age keep a constant finger on our Constitutions and several speeches of Washington, particularly his Farewell Address, in order to keep in mind what American democracy really means.

DURING the intermission in the Philharmonic program last Sunday, Deems Taylor, musical commentator, asked the question: "Why do we discover more great works of musical art among people of oppressed nations, or in countries that are politically stagnant, than among those who enjoy freedom?" There has been a great outcry, said Mr. Taylor, about the ruin of art by totalitarianism. Yet he could not find that this worked out so well with the composers. The British and the Americans are supposed to enjoy most freedom; but their composers are few as compared with Tsarist Russia and Poland. Deems Taylor provided his own answer by attributing musical composition largely to introspection. When the political world is disordered, artists find more easily a refuge within themselves, and music is the most introspective of arts. But may there not be another answer—not to contradict, but to supplement Deems Taylor's explanation? Concert music flourishes where folk music is still vigorous. The folk song and the popular hymns and folk dance are the basis of the highly developed compositions. "Progressive" nations that have no peasantry have lost their folk music along with it. This is one of the penalties we mechanized and sophisticated peoples pay for our favorite type of civilization.

HOW THEY DENY IN COLLEGE WHAT THEY AFFIRM IN THE SCHOOL

And how both fail to teach the basis of real democracy

CARL J. RYAN

COMFORTABLY seated in his easy chair, Father Mulcahy picked up a book and began to read. He had been reading but a short time when he heard footsteps coming down the hall. There was a knock on the door.

"Come in, Tom," said Father Mulcahy, for he well knew the knock. Tom entered. He was Father Mulcahy's nephew and a student at State Teachers College. It was not from choice, but rather necessity that he chose this particular college. He wanted to teach, and if he were to secure a position in the public school system there was just one avenue open—State Teachers College.

Father Mulcahy was a priest who took more than an average interest in his parish school. He kept well abreast of developments in the field of education. He could talk I.Q.'s, upper quartiles, integration, and the remainder of the argot with the best of the educators. Most of all, he was interested in the philosophy underlying educational theories. He took special care to see that the youth was correctly instructed in philosophy, that he would not be misled by the naturalism taught by State Teachers. Nothing pleased the pastor more than when Tom came to tell him of some tilt he had with a professor and how he had cornered the learned man with some particular question or objection.

"What's that you're reading, Uncle John? Looks like one of those new Democracy Readers."

"Yes, that's what it is. I got the whole set about a week ago. Do you know anything about them?"

"Not much, as yet, but I'll have to before long. The professor brought them into class the other day and spent nearly the whole period extolling them. He said they were just the thing for indoctrinating children with the principles of Democracy . . . , by far the best thing that has come out, . . . every child should read them. He intimated pretty strongly that we had better be familiar with these books before the final exams."

"Did he really use the word 'indoctrinate'?" asked Father Mulcahy.

"No, but he almost did. He caught himself just in time. What he said was something like this: 'These are splendid books to ind—,' then he hesitated an instant and completed the sentence, 'instruct the children in the principles of Democracy.'

You see he rails against indoctrination so much that the word almost slipped out before he knew what he was saying. What do you think of the books, Uncle John?"

"Well, Tom, I'm just on the last volume. I found them quite interesting." Father Mulcahy now laid down the book. "Educators are really funny, not always, of course, but just at times. For inconsistency you can't beat them."

"Just what are you driving at . . . pardon me, at what are you driving?" inquired Tom.

"You've heard the old expression," replied Father Mulcahy, "to bring in by the back door what they've kicked out the front. That's exactly what they're doing. They're trying to build up in the elementary schools what they are tearing down in the colleges."

Tom looked at the priest quizzically. It was not the first time that Father Mulcahy had made some disparaging remarks about the profession to which Tom was aspiring. Tom did not resent it because he realized the priest usually had some grounds for his criticism, and Tom knew that he was in now for a little lesson in logical thinking.

"I need not tell you, of course, that for some years our educational leaders in the colleges and universities have been ridiculing and denying the doctrine that there is any such thing as a set of fixed principles, objective truth, an unchanging standard of morality, or whatever else you want to call it. Their doctrine is that the customs of the people and the welfare of society are the standard by which everything is to be judged."

"That's no new idea to me," said Tom. "I've been hearing it for a couple of years over at State Teachers; but thanks to you, I think I'm straight on that point."

"Here of late," continued Father Mulcahy, "certain persons with a lot of power in their hands have begun to apply this principle with a great deal of ruthlessness. Hitler has decided that it would be a good thing for German society—or the State, if you want to put it that way—if the Jews were eliminated as far as possible from position of influence in the country. As a group they had quite a bit of money. Hitler thought it would be better for the State to have it and proceeded to take much of it.

There were too many of them in the professions, for the good of society, so they were kicked out right and left. In fact, there were too many of them in the country, so many of them were exiled. In short, they were deprived of what we call fundamental human rights.

"Hitler also thought," continued Father Mulcahy, "that Christianity was a hindrance to the development of National Socialism. Anything that was bad for the State should be suppressed. So the Nazis are making strenuous efforts to root out both the Protestant and the Catholic religions and to replace them with an ancient Teutonic paganism.

"I might also refer to what Stalin has been doing in Russia for some years. He thought it would be a good thing for the Communist cause if a couple of million kulaks, who were not very enthusiastic for the program of collectivization, were removed from the scene. The result of all this is that we are now seeing people on a large scale deprived of what we call fundamental human rights. In consequence, we are beginning to do some thinking on a subject that, up to the present time, we had taken for granted; I mean the basis upon which our liberties in this country rest."

"That's right," interrupted Tom. "Just the other day, the 'prof' read to us that part of the Declaration of Independence which says: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident:—That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among them are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness'."

"Yes," interrupted Father Mulcahy, "and he might have called your attention to the preceding paragraph where it speaks of the right of the people to assume 'the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them.' Now the point I want to bring out is that our liberty and rights under this form of government do not rest merely on the *words* of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. They were not put in there because the founders of our Republic believed it would be best for society to grant all men such rights. They were put in there because these men realized that man had such rights from his Creator."

"That means, if I understand it correctly," said Tom, "that governments don't give us these rights, they merely protect them for us."

"That's exactly it," replied Father Mulcahy.

"Just a moment," interrupted Tom, as he paused in reflection. "I think I see the point. That means, then, that the foundation of our rights and liberties rest on the supposition that there are such things as objective rights, and a fixed standard of morality, and that right and wrong are not something which society determines for itself."

"Correct," said Father Mulcahy. "Don't you see now that Hitler and Stalin are simply acting on the same principles that are taught in many of our colleges? They are simply carrying them to their logical conclusion and with a ruthlessness which brings on incredible suffering. If the mass of the American people were ever to accept these principles, what assurance have we that they would not change the

Constitution and suppress the rights of minorities? Don't think for one moment that our liberties rest on the *words* of the Constitution or Declaration of Independence. If enough people want to, they can easily change the Constitution, and do so legally. Our liberties are safe only so long as the Constitution represents the mind and will of the American people. That means only so long as they believe in fixed principles, objective right and wrong, and permanent moral standards."

"I see now," interrupted Tom, "what you meant when you said that educators are destroying in the colleges what they are trying to build up lower down. They are trying to lay the foundation of Democracy in the elementary schools, and destroying it in the colleges. In other words, when they preach the doctrine that there is no such thing as objective right or wrong, and fixed principles, they are simply undermining the very foundations of human rights and liberty and even of Democracy itself. I now get your point when you said that educators are really funny in their inconsistency. They teach with approval the doctrine that the welfare of society determines right and wrong, but condemn rulers when they apply these principles. And that brings up another point," continued Tom. "Belief in a fixed standard of morality and all that this implies rests on the belief in God."

"Yes, Tom," broke in Father Mulcahy. "Now go one step farther."

"And this means that religion is the basis of our whole system of government and without religion there is no solid foundation for human liberties and rights."

"Yes, Tom, unless we can keep religion alive in the hearts and minds of our people, our liberties rest on a very insecure foundation. We must remember that a majority can be just as tyrannical as an individual."

"I think I am pretty well set on this point." With a twinkle in his eye, Tom continued: "I am quite sure there will be a little discussion the next time the professor gets onto the subject of Democracy. Before I go, Uncle John, one more question: You haven't told me what you think of the Democracy Readers."

"So far as they go I think they're splendid," replied Father Mulcahy. "They will undoubtedly help to develop in children a sense of fair play, respect for the rights of others, and a toleration for those of different religious faiths. In several of the books there is a chapter dealing with the origin of religious freedom in this country. The purpose is to impress upon children the necessity of religious toleration if we are to live together peacefully. My only complaint is that they don't go far enough and show that religion is really basic to the whole question of Democracy."

"Suppose they did," replied Tom. "Some day an unsuspecting teacher might notice one of her bright pupils anxiously clamoring for attention. 'What is it, Johnny?' she would ask. 'Please, teacher, if religion is the foundation of Democracy, and they teach Democracy in the schools, why don't they also teach religion?'"

PAUL JAMES FRANCIS, PEEKSKILL'S POVERELLO

HENRY WATTS

A GREAT many years ago, in the Fall of 1913 to be precise, I was walking with Father Paul of Graymoor along Third Avenue in New York City. And the conversation turning upon the Reverend Father and his work, he remarked very forthrightly: "Everyone thinks I am crazy!"

"Everyone, Father?" I asked.

"Well, if not everyone, at least a good many people do, both in the Church and out of it."

This was in the spacious days before 1914, of which even the memory seems difficult to recapture. The particular form of craziness which aroused the criticism of Father Paul's acquaintance seemed to be his belief that words had not only a sound, but an inner meaning as well. At that, Father Paul was probably at one with the realists of medieval scholasticism. A word, so he viewed the business, was not a mere phantasm of the mind, some concept that had no existence in reality. It signified not only the name of a thing, but the thing itself. And unless one gets hold of that idea, much of the life work of Father Paul is incomprehensible.

If you remember the smug pre-War era at all, it is easy to recollect that there were certain social conventions that were never outraged, certain indelicacies that were never perpetrated. It was a social indelicacy to mention God in drawing rooms and at the less informal dinner tables. God was in His Heaven, and all was right with the five-percents.

It seems that it was some such sort of oozy and unctious humbug as this that Father Paul bumped up against. As he said himself, referring mostly to his early days: they thought he was crazy. Which, of course, *they* would have done. Particularly with the Rev. Lewis Wattson, a somewhat fashionable young Episcopalian preacher, who seemed to have got hold of the muddle-headed idea that words meant real things or they meant nothing at all: that they were the expressions of facts, not a sort of intellectual flatulence.

How the thing started may possibly be explained later. But one understands that the Rev. Lewis Wattson had been brought up on the idea that the Sacred Scriptures were the inspired Word of God. His father was a minister of the Episcopal Church, who sincerely believed in and practised his ministry. So we come upon the young Episcopalian cleric, with his quite rational and realistic conception of the meaning of words, arriving at the settled conclusion that there is a God, and that God has revealed Himself through His inspired word.

From this part on, we get the clue to the ex-

traordinary career (and it was extraordinary) of Father Paul, which led him to the wilderness of Graymoor near Peekskill, and saw him go down to the grave, surrounded by his religious brethren, a priest of the Catholic Church. There is a consistency running through all his life, and it accords with a perfectly sane principle.

The counsels of perfection recorded in the Gospel are entirely to the point: Sell what thou hast and give it to the poor, and come follow Me. Whether the clergyman of the Episcopal Church had anything to sell and give to the poor, matters little here. What is of importance is that he took these words in their literal meaning, and whatever of property he may have had, of that he divested himself.

In due time we find him located on that bleak hillside by the draughty Hudson valley, which he renamed the Mount of the Atonement. From that stems the origins of the Society of the Atonement, a Congregation of Friars and Sisters who follow the Franciscan observance.

Of the vicissitudes attending the beginnings of that Society it is unnecessary to speak here. Authority in the Episcopal Church appears not to have taken too kindly to this little group, which dared to apply the words of the Sacred Scriptures in their literal meaning.

There is one particular verse in a particular chapter in Saint Matthew's Gospel which, taken in its literal meaning, somewhat more than implies a primacy given by the Founder of the Christian Church to Saint Peter. So, for some years the Anglican communities at Graymoor stressed the necessity for all Christians to unite themselves in communion with the Successor of Saint Peter. They even inaugurated an octave of prayer toward this end. Of this, the not illogical consequence was that the Friars and Sisters of the Society of the Atonement were received into the Catholic Church in 1909.

This might, perhaps, bring the survey to an end, with possibly the added notation that under Catholic encouragement the Society of the Atonement expanded and increased in a measure that could never have been hoped for under its original Anglican auspices. But it leaves us little better informed about the personality of the Poverello of Peekskill.

The practical and literal application of the Gospel was Father Paul's rule of life, both in his meditations and sermons, and in the events of his daily living. Sometimes it was slightly embarrassing to his companions, as in the instance when Father Paul invited an associate to accompany him to a congress at Boston. Now where the Gospel says take neither purse nor scrip, Father Paul took neither purse nor scrip—whatever a scrip may be. Anyway, the purse would have been superfluous, since Father Paul was under a vow to touch no money, and no money he touched.

But on this Boston adventure his associate was entrusted with just sufficient money to pay the boat fare to Boston and back—and no more. Nothing for food by the wayside, nothing for lodging.

And, since revelations are being revealed, this traveling companion on inquiring about the where-withal to procure food and lodging upon arrival in Boston, received with edification but also chagrin Father Paul's admonition: Be not over solicitous saying what shall we eat; the morrow will be solicitous for itself.

However, the Poverello was right. The morrow *was* solicitous for itself, and so were several successive morrows. And as he had neither purse nor scrip, Father Paul was relieved of the fatigue of diving down into either. If a looker-on may venture an opinion, it was an exquisite example of sheer faith.

And fortified by a literal faith like this, Father Paul from time to time embarked upon adventures and pious works, from which many wise and prudent might have held back hesitatingly. *Si quaeris monumentum, circumspice!* Father Paul is entitled to that quite as much as Sir Christopher Wren.

If a man truly believes in his heart, as Father Paul in his heart believed, that "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," why should his courage fail in beginning a work that was for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the benefit of suffering mankind, merely for the lack of a little ready gold dug out of God's earth? God is not limited by the rise and fall of the stock market or the laws of supply and demand. The First Gospel, whose words set the Society of the Atonement on the road to Catholic Unity, was written by a Hebrew tax collector who left his job to become a Catholic bishop. So it might be that the sanctity of a work is not necessarily consecrated by the fatness of its checking account.

Father Paul's great work for the undeserving poor is a classic instance of his sanctified craziness. First of all he created a category for these wandering men, and dubbed them the Brothers Christopher. Then he asked no questions about their religion or personal hygiene, but only if they were in need. And their need was the passport that carried them through the doors of St. Christopher's Inn. The methods used by the five and ten chain stores to make profits for stockholders, Father Paul adopted to make profits for the Kingdom of Heaven. He gathered up the unconsidered trifles, and distributed them to needy missions and missionaries, and his bounty went to the ends of the earth. A Chinese priest who knew no English except the postal address of Graymoor, wrote in Latin asking for alms for his people, and got what he asked for; so wise was Father Paul in his worldly unwisdom. Deserving young men, who wished to test their vocation either as priests or brothers in the Society, had to furnish no financial references. If God called them, Father Paul put it up to God to provide for them.

Father Paul did not expect to please all the people all the time, and in that he was not disappointed of his expectation. His consistent practice of evangelical poverty did not always excite the applause of admiring audiences. But he had faith and he had trust; and of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

PRIMER FOR VOTERS: V: STATE CONVENTIONS

BOXHOLDER



FRONT-PAGE political news during the past three weeks has been focusing public attention on the preferential primaries. Mr. Farley's name is filed in Massachusetts. Mr. Dewey seeks pledged delegates in Wisconsin. So does Mr. Vandenberg. So does Mr. Gannett. Mr. Roosevelt's name will appear on the ballots in Illinois. With news like that appearing daily, and a battle royal beginning in the rings of both parties there is bound to be much talk about pledges, preferentials and chances at the ballot box. As a result, the unwary reader may be led to think that in choosing delegates to the National Conventions the primary election is the method most in use among the States.

That would be a false conclusion. More than half the States, some twenty-nine in all, still hold to their old practice of naming delegates by means of a State convention.

How does the State Convention work? How are its members chosen, and what are its powers? Is it a mere formality, a machine-driven and boss-controlled affair, or is it responsive to the will of the electorate?

An answer, at least a partial answer, to these questions can be found by examining the procedure in one of the States, for example, Texas. But to make that study simpler we need an actor and a few bits of scenery. This column, therefore, creates Joe Burke, Democrat; it gives him a habitation in Dallas; it endows him with a desire to put John N. Garner in the White House; and then it invites the reader to glance at the four steps by which this Texan rises to a seat in the National Democratic Convention.

Mr. Burke is a duly qualified voter who:

1. Participates in the *precinct* convention;
2. Is elected by the precinct as delegate to the *county* convention;
3. Is there chosen to represent the county at the *State* convention;
4. Is named by the State as delegate to the *National* Convention.

The reader should be warned about the importance of the Texas precinct. No politician from down Rio Grande way ever made a speech without boasting that his State is large enough to blanket the whole of France, or that some of its counties are bigger than Rhode Island. And yet the same speaker, the moment he comes to politics, will show an amazing interest in the tiny neighborhood close to his home. In other words, the Lone Star politician is precinct-conscious, much more so than the politicians of other States, the reason being that

everywhere in Texas—from the Gulf to the Panhandle, in the cotton, oil or cow country—one finds the precinct to be an extraordinarily vital and self-conscious unit, jealous of its individuality, and ready to do battle for its interests.

Early this spring, the State will publish a bulletin informing its people that on May 4 party conventions are to be held in every precinct of the State. It is the sane and pleasant custom in Texas to stage such political affairs in the coolth of the evening; and so, when the proper time comes, our Mr. Burke will finish his dinner, put on his hat, and walk a block or two to the public school or some other meeting place in the 10th Precinct, where he will find perhaps 300 of his neighbors already assembled. Preliminaries are handled quickly in these meetings. Somebody will rap on a table for order. A politician previously blessed by the State Committee will be nominated as chairman; there will be a chorus of assent, and the little group is now organized for action. Its first business is to check its own participants to determine whether they are qualified to take part in a strictly Democratic meeting.

Our Mr. Burke will successfully pass the various tests. First of all, he is not a Negro (only white men can participate in the primary conventions, for these are purely party affairs in which, technically, no real vote is cast; hence the colored citizen, though barred on account of race, cannot appeal to the Fifteenth Amendment). Second, Mr. Burke can produce a receipt proving that he has paid his poll tax (\$1.50) for the year. He will not be questioned about party affiliation, but even if he boasted that he is a Republican, he must be admitted to the Democratic convention. He may speak, make nominations, and vote. That is the law along the Rio Grande.

With all its members properly certified, the convention will embark upon its main job, which is the election of delegates to attend the coming county convention. Any real Democrat is eligible for this honor; but before it is conferred, there will be a full discussion of candidates, motives and party interests ranging from the precinct, to the national campaign.

Sometime during the evening our Mr. Burke makes an address, insisting that the sage of Uvalde ought to be the party's candidate and the nation's President. This idea fits in so well with the sentiments of most of his hearers that Burke's name is forthwith proposed as delegate. Several other men are nominated also (for party rule apportions one precinct delegate for every 25 voters) and then all are formally elected. Whereupon the convention, not without some opposition by a minority, passes a measure imposing unit rule upon the delegates and instructing them to make a stand for Mr. Garner.

On the same evening, it may be wise to add, all the other precincts in Dallas County—and there are a considerable number of them—hold similar conventions. Since they are all popular, democratic

assemblies, making decisions by majority vote, it may easily happen that several precincts will instruct their delegates for Mr. Roosevelt, several others for Mr. Farley, and a few for the other major candidates.

The precinct convention is thus seen to be a *primary* convention—the first move in Texas procedure. The next two steps can be summarized briefly.

On May 7, Joe Burke will appear at county headquarters. Here he will take part in a second and much larger meeting—the Dallas County Convention, composed of delegates from all the county's precincts and headed by the County Chairman. This group's main business is to choose an apportioned number of delegates to the big State convention, and the group is wholly within its rights if it decides to tell these delegates what Presidential candidate to favor.

Three weeks must pass. On May 28 the State convention will assemble in a city previously designated. Seated in this supreme party council are the delegates from Brazos County, from Comanche County, from Bowie, Nacogdoches, Pecos and Red River—in fact from all the 254 counties of the State. Perhaps the majority of these are bound—just as our Dallas delegation is bound—by instructions from their county convention, and in that event there is danger of a spirited clash among various factions, leaders, and regional interests. Nearly every political meeting in the land of Davy Crockett and Sam Houston is marked by violent conflicts of view and much regrettable language, but in the end a Texas convention is sure to compose its differences and to rally around a point of unity.

The chief purpose of the present assembly is to choose delegates to cast the State's 46 votes in the National Party Convention. Our Mr. Burke is named (and that means he is officially *elected*) as delegate from the Fifth Congressional District, the district embracing his home in Dallas.

Other delegates are named for each of the 21 Congressional Districts, and then a slate of delegates-at-large is chosen. The Lone Star State, as was said above, is entitled to 46 votes in the National meeting, but it is customary to distribute these among a large group of delegates. Thus, in 1936, the State sent 16 men and women to cast its at-large votes, and named four delegates for each District, each with a half vote.

By majority vote, the Convention may impose a unit rule, binding the delegation to support a favored candidate. In the bitter struggle eight years ago in Chicago, the Texas delegates were tied to Mr. Garner. When he "released" his delegates and tossed their votes to Mr. Roosevelt, the latter's nomination was assured.

Returns on the Roosevelt-Landon contest of 1936 showed that Texas boasts of only about one Republican to every eight Democrats. Nevertheless, the G.O.P. procedure follows the lines drawn above, and this party sends 26 votes to its Convention.

RELIGIOUS ILLITERACY IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PAUL L. BLAKELY, S.J.

SOME weeks ago, the Kentucky House of Representatives considered a bill to permit the local boards of education to provide "moral instruction" in the public schools. By a vote of 34 to 33, the House rejected the bill on the ground that it would "endanger religious freedom."

This bill, it would appear, was permissive in character, not mandatory. The boards would be authorized to institute courses for the benefit of pupils whose parents wished them to have some training in morals, but compelled no pupil to take this instruction. It is hard to see in this permission any encroachment upon religious freedom. No State, of course, can oblige any child to receive instruction in religion or morals. But there is no prohibition, either in the Federal Constitution, or in the Constitutions of the several States, which forbids the public-school authorities so to arrange their schedules that the children may receive such instruction in religion, as their parents may desire.

This has actually been done in some States. Under this arrangement, one or two periods are set aside weekly, during which the children, on written request of their parents, attend classes in religion conducted by teachers who have been approved by the respective religious authorities, Jewish, Catholic and Protestant, and by the school board. On its face, the action by the Kentucky House would debar this plan. In one sense, it actually limits religious freedom, since it obliges parents, who are not able to send their children to religious schools, to entrust them to publicly supported institutions in which "moral instruction" is forbidden.

To Christian parents and educators, this deliberate exclusion of religion from the public schools is daily becoming more intolerable. In this unhappy exclusion, which has been the rule for a century and more, is found the reason for the statement that we are rapidly becoming a nation of religious illiterates.

Precisely how many boys and girls are growing up in utter ignorance of religion, no one can say. Obviously, the children in Catholic primary and secondary schools, and in a few non-Catholic private schools, must be excepted, but these, compared with the total number of children of school age, are hardly one in six. Dr. H. G. Ross, secretary of the International Council of Religious Education, thinks that at present from fifteen to twenty million children under seventeen years of age "are without religious instruction."

Dr. Ross' estimate will not seem excessive when we consult the school and population statistics. In 1930, there were 36,164,601 persons in the United States, over five and under twenty years of age.

The number has grown somewhat in the last decade, but allowing for this increase, and also for the fact that the age-limit fixed by Dr. Ross does not correspond exactly with that of the Bureau of the Census, it is clear that the number of young religious illiterates—approximately from forty to sixty per cent of the whole group—is appalling. Personally, I am inclined to take Dr. Ross' figures as an underestimate.

According to figures for 1936, 26,307,098 pupils were enrolled in the public elementary schools, and about 6,700,000 in the public high schools. How many of these boys and girls are receiving any instruction in religion outside the school which can be termed adequate, is a question that cannot be answered definitely. No census covers this field, and we are obliged to rely upon reports such as that given by Dr. Ross. His estimate that out of approximately 36,000,000 young people, from fifteen to twenty millions are "without religious instruction" seems to me to be well within the bounds of fact. In some parts of the country, this horrifying proportion of illiterates may well be higher.

If the welfare of this country is conditioned, as Washington believed, upon the preservation of religion and of morality by our people, the future does not present a pleasing prospect. As Dr. Luther Weigle, of Yale, has well said:

When the public school ignores religion, it conveys to our children the suggestion that religion is without truth or value. It becomes, quite unintentionally, I grant, a fosterer of atheism and irreligion. The present system reflects the conviction of no one, except such free-thinkers as have been fetched up in atheism. . . . The ignoring of religion by the public schools of America endangers the perpetuity of those moral and religious institutions which are most characteristic of American life. It imperils the future of religion among us, and with religion, the future of the nation itself. (*New York Times*, May 16, 1926.)

The fear that by giving children in the public schools an escape from religious and moral illiteracy, we in some way "endanger religious freedom" or subject the State to the Church, is quite without foundation. We do not ask the State to teach religion, for that is not its function. All we ask is that children in the public schools be given an opportunity to learn something about Almighty God and His law.

A short time ago, a non-Catholic physician said to me: "I know my children ought to have some religion, but how can their mother or I teach them? We don't know enough to teach it. The Sunday school can't help me. It's not open on rainy Sundays, it's closed all summer, and it has no trained teachers."

I believe that many non-Catholics are anxious to give their children an education in religion, but find themselves in the position of my friend. The Sunday school is not the answer, nor, I admit, is the plan of dismissing the children twice a week for religious instruction a complete answer. The real answer is the system which does not divorce religion from education. But the religious instruction plan will help many, and will reduce the number of our religious illiterates.

IN ANY UNITED EUROPE RELIGION MUST FIND A PLACE

The problem of Europe studied in terms of Germany

JOHN LaFARGE

IS A federated Europe possible? In a preceding article (February 10), we saw that the crucial difficulty of conflicting national sovereignties cannot be overcome if the nation and state are necessarily identified. Though frequently and advantageously united, the nation and the state, in Chancellor Seipel's words, "are two independent forms of association." But even if this difficulty is overcome, there must still exist a force or influence in order to give life and cohesion to such a federation's structure. This influence is that of religion.

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

Religion must *operate* if such a federation is to be anything more than a mere name. This is an elementary human truth. A federation of states is like any individual state in that respect. If religion has ceased to exert its influence upon individual lives, then the state must decay, because states are made up of men, not offices. Offices mean responsibility. Those holding them, whether they be county commissioners or presidents of republics, must look to God's approval before man's in the administration of their trust. Therefore, the extent to which we can look with any degree of optimism upon any form of international collaboration or federation as the basis of future peace terms is limited by our guess as to the degree to which religion continues to exert its influence in the different countries parties to such agreements.

This is but another way of saying that any international structure must have a moral basis. You cannot erect a federation upon crowds of atheists or near-atheists. Without religion the peoples who engage in a peace contract are mere hordes, at the mercy of their political exploiters. They lack that moral cohesion which distinguishes a true people from a mob. They also lack that charity which is necessary if international justice is to be fulfilled.

THE EFFECT OF CONCORDATS

As long as Christianity can obtain even a precarious recognition, it can continue to infuse some life into the body politic. It can lay the seeds of future regeneration, as it is now laying them among the peasant and working youth of France and other once Catholic countries.

The Concordat which the Holy See has drawn up with the various governments since the World War had the effect of enabling religion to continue its influence upon private and public morals. Through these Concordats the operation of the Catholic religion was secured in the various countries, in some to greater, in others to a lesser extent. Bishops were given access to the Holy See and their appointment saved from political interference. Catholic education and Catholic social action were rescued from state control. The pacifying voice of the Church and its supreme Pontiff were made audible to the nations. Disputes were regulated with regard to ecclesiastical property.

AGREEMENTS MADE POSSIBLE

Less obvious, however, but more directly pertinent to the question of peace terms is the fact that recognition of the Church by any government is a recognition of certain principles of law and order which make *possible* lasting agreements between the nations. When the people of a given nation acknowledge the right of the Church to function within their borders, they pay testimony to the difference between might and right. They acknowledge that a purely spiritual power, which commands no military weapons, can none the less command deference from those who summon armies and navies to do their will.

Any such recognition of the juridic character of the Catholic Church is clearly impossible as long as the various ideologies are in power. The Church can come to no satisfactory agreement with a state dominated by Nazism, Communism or utilitarian plutocracy. It may reach a *modus vivendi* with some of these states, and thereby safeguard some of the Church's most essential ministries within their borders; but there can be no true Concordat. Even a *modus vivendi* has been impossible from the beginning with Soviet Russia, owing to that regime's avowed and rigidly consistent espousal of formal anti-religion and atheism. Peace terms between the nations, however, cannot rest content with any mere *modus vivendi*. The educational question must be finally settled in France; while in Germany there must be a reconciliation of the Church's juridic rights with the crucial question of

national unification of the religiously divided German peoples.

PROBLEM OF GERMAN UNITY

This latter question presents, in the long run, one of the most difficult problems for a just peace or a federated union after the war. How can Germany's national unity be secured without violating the religious rights of the 50,000,000 Catholics—now half of her total population—who are included within German boundaries since the incorporation of Austria and German Czecho-Slovakia?

There are three possible answers to this question, none of them reconcilable with a just peace, or indeed with peace at all.

The first proposal would be to scrap the whole idea of German national unity, and to split up Germany into some sort of a federation of German-speaking states analogous to Germany's condition before the days of Bismarck. This is the idea of the *Action Française* and the French Royalists. Charles Maurras and Léon Daudet frankly despair of ever coming to terms with a united Germany. They propose that in place of one "Germany" we should have many "Germanies" (*Les Allemagnes*).

While conceivable that the Reich might be remodeled upon some federative basis, it is inconceivable that any victory, no matter how complete, could impose upon the German people a sacrifice of their aspirations for national unity. Plenty of them may be glad to get rid of *Ein Führer*, but they will part no more from the idea of *Ein Reich* and *Ein Volk*. The problem is not to get rid of unity, but to find some other basis for that unity than the present disastrous national philosophy.

The second proposal, to retain National Socialism within the framework of an international federation, is so clearly preposterous that it needs no refutation. From its very nature, National Socialism can accept no place except that of entire dominance in the juridic sphere. It may extend toleration to the Catholic Church, but it cannot afford any juridic recognition.

CATHOLIC GERMANY COULD BE UNIFIED

Catholic Germany has a basis of national unity in the Catholic religion. Such a doctrine is unwelcome to the nationalists, who look upon the Church as destructive of national unity because the Church is supra-national, and refuses to grant to nationality more than a secondary part in human affairs. It is also unwelcome to the internationalists, who would do away with what Pope Pius XII (*Summi Pontificatus*) calls "the peculiar characteristics which each people, with jealous and intelligible pride, cherishes and retains as a precious heritage." The Church not only tolerates, but "hails with joy" and "sponsors and develops" the real values in the various civilizations.

We do not need to look to the past to see Catholicism as a living principle of national unity. It is evident today in certain predominantly Catholic countries. What is more, Catholicism can be a principle of national unity and the Church can receive ample juridic recognition without thereby impair-

ing the rights of religious minorities. At the International Eucharistic Congress in Budapest in 1938, the Hungarian nation paid its official homage, as a nation, to Christ the Eucharistic King. Yet the leader in that great civic act of homage, the Regent of Hungary, was a Protestant, Admiral Horthy.

BUT WHAT OF NON-CATHOLIC GERMANY?

So the problem of German unity would find a solution, or at least the indications of a solution, were the new Germany's 50,000,000 Catholics free to work out their own destiny independently of the other 30,000,000 who do not share their Faith. But they are not free; and as long as the Reich as a whole retains this immense religious cleavage, there can clearly be no national unity formed immediately on the basis of Catholicism, any more than on the basis of Protestantism, as was the dream of the old Prussianizing Pan-Germans in pre-War years. Likewise the German Reich lacks natural geographic or economic unity. Any boundary to the east or south is determined by where Germans choose to live, not by any natural barriers.

Moreover, if any new principle of national unity is adopted by Germany for the sake of a European federation, after the devil of National Socialism has been cast out, this same principle must be accepted by Germany's chief rivals, England and France. Neither of these countries can stand secure within its own particular brand of imperial or national unity and lay down laws by which the Fourth Reich is to be guided. The same principles must be accepted by all.

YET CATHOLIC GERMANY MAY POINT THE WAY

Is there any way of even partially solving this problem outside of an integral return of all nations to the Catholic Faith? Possibly not. But since such a return is at present so remote, this sounds merely like a counsel of despair. The Church, through the principles laid down in the Lateran Treaty, showed a "way out" for the nations from the dilemma created by identifying nationality with their political sovereignty. The philosophy of national values, as outlined in the *Summi Pontificatus*, indicates how a nation may retain a self-respecting cultural integrity while forming a part of the world community of nations. Catholic Germany can yet provide non-Catholic Germany with its formula for national unity, provided non-Catholic Germany can rid itself of its fears of "Roman domination"; provided, also, that the rest of Europe, and the great Powers in particular, will be guided by that formula.

The Catholic Church will not provide the recipe. But the Church can point the way to it. Morbid nationalism feeds, like a cancer, upon the body politic that has surrendered to it. Once that social, economic and religious realities take the place of that morbid nationalism, an appraisal can be made of national values. Religion teaches and exemplifies such an appraisal. Again we repeat that all peace terms begin not with the ambition of governments, but with the genuine needs of peoples, in the light of the eternal destiny of the millions of souls who compose them.

CHRONICLE

THE ADMINISTRATION. President Roosevelt boarded a United States warship at Pensacola, Fla., for a vacation cruise. The warship was convoyed by two destroyers instead of the usual one. . . . The Navy Department estimated that by June 30 next there will be under construction fifty-one warships, comprising eight battleships, one aircraft carrier, six cruisers, twenty-three destroyers, thirteen submarines, at a total cost of \$1,082,000,000. . . . The Treasury Department reported revenue collections of \$4,957,046,038 for 1939 as compared with \$5,507,613,350 for 1938. Income taxes from corporations and individuals decreased from \$2,568,398,668 in 1938 to \$1,827,448,775 in 1939. . . . President Roosevelt issued a proclamation declaring it the duty of persons over eighteen years of age to answer all questions in the sixteenth decennial census, to commence April 1, and warned of the penalty for refusal to answer. . . . President Roosevelt announced that Sumner Welles, Under-Secretary of State, was being sent to Europe "to visit Italy, France, Germany and Great Britain. This visit is solely for the purpose of advising the President and the Secretary of State as to present conditions in Europe." Mr. Welles will confer with officials of the countries named. Secretary of State Hull revealed that diplomatic conversations had already begun with neutral nations, as part of a "sound and lasting peace" policy. These conversations, the Secretary said, "involve no plan or plans but are in the nature of preliminary inquiries relating to a sound international economic system and at the same time world-wide reduction of armaments. Matters involving present war conditions are not a part of these preliminary conversations." He added the conversations could be extended to belligerents "in so far as they involve these two common problems of future peace."

CONGRESS. Senator Byrd placed in the Congressional Record official figures showing that the total national debt, public and private, increased \$12,500,000,000 between 1933 and 1939. The Senator declared the total national debt in 1939 is \$152,565,000,000 as compared with \$140,055,000,000 in 1933; the Federal Government debt in 1939 is \$40,439,000,000 as compared with \$22,538,000,000 in 1933; the city-county-State debt in 1939 is \$19,626,000,000 as compared with \$19,517,000,000 in 1933; private debts amount to \$92,500,000,000 in 1939 as compared with \$98,000,000,000 in 1933. His data, the Senator said, was obtained from reports of the Treasury Department and the Division of Program Planning of the Agriculture Adjustment Administration. . . . Senator Johnson declared the United States was not "minding its own business" in sending Under-Secretary of State Welles to Eu-

rope. Other Senators compared the Welles mission with that of Colonel House. . . . The House, after agreeing to Senate cuts of \$124,270,000 from the original total, approved \$251,822,588 for the Emergency National Defense Bill, sent the measure to the White House for signature. . . . The Senate by a vote of 49 to 27 increased the lending authority of the Export-Import Bank from \$100,000,000 to \$200,000,000. The measure is intended to make possible credits to Finland and China. Senator Johnson asserted the bill was designed to enable the Export-Import Bank to become "wet nurse to the whole world with our money." Senator George opposed the measure as a possible first step toward United States involvement in war. . . . Secretary Hull wrote to the Senate that proposed bills to make the Neutrality Law applicable to the Finnish-Soviet and Sino-Japanese wars were contrary to the State Department program. . . . The Harrison resolution requesting the Securities and Exchange Commission to expedite any private bond issue for Finland was passed by the Senate 65 to 3. . . . The Rampeck Civil Service Bill, which will blanket into civil service, with only non-competitive examinations, Federal employees not under civil service, was passed by the House. An amendment to the bill to insure each State its quota of workers was approved; a motion to make the examinations competitive was defeated.

WASHINGTON. Replying to a Senate query asking if the Soviet Government had fulfilled its agreements made at the time President Roosevelt recognized Moscow, Secretary Hull intimated that the Soviets had not, that Washington had protested several instances of Soviet non-fulfillment, but that the maintenance of diplomatic relations was "not wholly contingent" on the Soviet fulfillment. . . . Reversing the Supreme Court of Florida, which had upheld the death sentence for four young Negroes accused of murder, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled the confessions of the defendants had been obtained in gross violation of their civil rights under the Constitution. Chief Justice Hughes awarded the writing and reading of the verdict to Associate Justice Hugo Black, a former Ku Klux Klan member. . . . The Supreme Court, which recently ruled that New York State could tax merchandise sold by outside companies to New York consumers, enjoined Arkansas from imposing a tax on gasoline in excess of twenty gallons carried in fuel tanks of interstate buses if the gasoline were for use in other States. Dissenting from this decision, Justices Black, Frankfurter and Douglas urged that the courts leave to Congress the question of "the constantly increasing barriers to trade among the States." . . . The American Youth Con-

gress, which contains Communist elements, met in Washington. Several thousand members, gathered on the White House lawn, were addressed by the President. He denounced the Soviet Union as an absolute dictatorship, which, after allying itself with another dictatorship, invaded a small nation. Declaring that ninety-eight per cent of the American people want to help the Finns, he chided those units of the Youth Congress which voted against such aid. Some boos greeted this portion of his speech. The President told the youths they had the right to call themselves Communists, but not the right to subvert the Government. John L. Lewis, addressing the Youth Congress in the Department of Labor auditorium, bitterly denounced the President, then proposed a joint convention of the C.I.O. and A. F. of L. to vote on re-union, pledged he would not be a candidate for any office in the reunited organization. Mrs. Roosevelt, an active sponsor of the Youth Congress, upheld it in its unwillingness to condemn the Soviet invasion of Finland, saying "the members should not go on record for anything they do not believe in." Mrs. Roosevelt told the youths: "I agree with you in sympathy for Spain." The Congress had sided with the Spanish Reds.

AT HOME. A resolution calling upon the Board of Education of New York City to ban the American Student Union from using tax-supported school building for meetings, to rescind the Union's charter in schools, was introduced into the State Legislature at Albany. . . . F.B.I. agents raided the New York headquarters of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, subpoenaed leaders to appear before the Federal grand jury. . . . The Very Rev. Paul James Francis, who founded the Society of the Atonement when an Episcopalian minister and later brought it into the Church, died February 8, at Graymoor Monastery, Garrison, N. Y., aged seventy-seven years. . . . Mayor La Guardia issued a questionnaire, ordered New York City's 18,000 policemen to disclose whether they were or are members of the Christian Front, "or of any subversive, Communist, bund or Fascist club or organization." A preliminary report based on answers from 16,903 policemen revealed that twenty-seven are still members of the Christian Front, 407 had been. Six policemen refused to answer on the ground the questionnaire constituted an invasion of their civil rights. . . . James Roosevelt, eldest son of the President, filed suit for divorce in Los Angeles from his wife, Betty Cushing Roosevelt, whom he married ten years ago. He charged desertion. If the divorce is granted, he will be the third of the President's five children to be divorced.

CHINA-JAPAN. Declaring they have now won enough territory in China to establish "the new order in East Asia," Japan called on Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to surrender. In reply, the Chinese Government called for a new munitions loan. . . . Japan gave notice of the abrogation of its arbitra-

tion treaty with the Netherlands. The treaty will thus expire in August.

WAR. London revealed that two British trawlers were sunk by Nazi planes. . . . One German submarine returning home reported the destruction of eight British merchant ships. The British Admiralty reported the sinking of four German submarines. . . . In the Finnish-Russian war, the Soviets claimed successes on an eighteen-mile front in the Summa sector of the Karelian Isthmus. Moscow reported the capture of 153 defensive fortifications of the Finnish Mannerheim Line. The Finns admitted the Soviets had taken some advanced positions, but denied any extensive Red penetration of the Line. Fighting raged on all five Finnish-Soviet fronts from the Gulf of Finland to the Arctic Ocean.

GREAT BRITAIN. The Chamberlain Government lifted the legal ban against recruiting for Finland, authorized Britons not called to their own colors to enlist. . . . A force of Australian and New Zealand troops, estimated to be 30,000 strong, debarked in Egypt. . . . John Buchan, first Baron Tweedsmuir of Elsfield, the King's Governor General of Canada since 1935, died February 11 in Montreal, aged sixty-four years.

FOOTNOTES. Following rejection by Britain and France of the safety sea zone set up by the American republics, Germany likewise rejected the proposal, but indicated readiness to discuss the suggested zone if Britain and France would revise their stand on the matter. Berlin declared that if United States ships enter Gibraltar either voluntarily or under British compulsion "the theoretical right exists for German submarines to treat them as having lost their neutrality and torpedo them." . . . The Russo-German trade treaty was signed in Moscow. . . . In the Vatican, the Congregation of Rites in the presence of Pope Pius approved a decree for the beatification of Mother Philippine Rose Duchesne, who brought the Society of the Sacred Heart to the United States in 1818. Mother Duchesne died at St. Charles, Mo. in 1852. . . . Dr. Rafael Angel Calderon Guardia was elected President of Costa Rica. . . . Turkey ousted eighty German technicians from industries connected with national defense, gave the Germans a few days to leave the country. A German-owned Krupp shipyard was taken over by the Turks. . . . Premier Daladier of France received a unanimous vote of confidence from the Chamber of Deputies. . . . 1,500 Spanish Loyalist refugees applied for Mexican citizenship. Once Mexican citizens they can enter the United States. . . . Replying to reports from Rome that Myron C. Taylor, President Roosevelt's personal representative to the Vatican, was to be considered an official Ambassador there, Baptists in the United States demanded his recall. . . . In Geneva, the International Labor Organization expelled Russia from membership.

NO CIVIL SERVICE!

THE squabble in the House over the latest civil-service bill ended in the usual manner, with the rout of civil service. Mrs. Edith Nourse Rogers, a member of the House from Massachusetts, led a vigorous fight for reform. But since the result had been settled by partisan leaders before the fight began, she might as well have held her peace. Once more the House has shown that it will promptly defeat any move for immediate reform of our alleged civil-service system.

What the leaders planned was a scheme to give civil-service ratings to some 300,000 Federal employes who were appointed to their jobs without reference to civil-service requirements, and in some cases, in utter violation of the primary purposes of civil service. It was not difficult to devise such a scheme. The head of the Federal agency concerned, a political employe himself, would issue a certificate stating that the job-holder had served for six months with "merit." The employe would then take a "suitable" but "non-competitive" test, after which he would be declared a civil-service employe for the rest of his days.

The milk in this political coconut is found in two words, "suitable" and "non-competitive."

A story is told of a board of Cambridge dons faced with the trying obligation of recommending for an academic degree the scion of a noble house, who had occasionally been seen around the University. The scion's blood was blue, and his brain empty. The problem before the dons was to frame an examination that was "suitable." On the one hand, no scion of this noble house, except a Papist in the days of Elizabeth, had ever been denied his degree; on the other, they were unwilling to wreck their academic consciences utterly. At last they hit on three questions; the date of the Battle of Hastings, who wrote Hamlet, and what Queen ruled England in the nineteenth century. With a little "suitable" prompting, the scion passed, with honors.

Mrs. Rogers has heard of "suitable" examinations, if not of this story. She offered an amendment to require these office-holders to pass an open competitive examination. The amendment was overwhelmingly defeated, and she could not muster even enough votes to demand a roll call.

Competent office-holders would have no great difficulty in passing a rigid, as opposed to a "suitable" examination. The vote of the House indicates that the politicians have no faith in the ability of their appointees to measure up to honest civil-service requirements. To argue that the successors of these job-holders will be required to submit to open competitive examinations, satisfies no friend of civil service. If these examinations are to be imposed ultimately, why not impose them at once?

There is only one answer to that question. Real civil-service tests would throw too many politicians out of their jobs, held at the expense of the public. The measure adopted by the House keeps them in their jobs for life, and that is exactly what the House wished to do.

EDITOR

IN BROKEN FIELDS

THE President has good reasons for sending Sumner Welles abroad. As the initiator of our foreign policy, subject in many respects, it is true, to Congress, he needs definite information. How much information that is definite and also accurate Mr. Welles may be able to gather, remains to be seen. A quarter of a century ago, Colonel House roamed through Europe on a similar errand, with results that were not happy. We hope that Mr. Welles will not confine his investigations to the allied countries. First-hand reports from Poland, Austria and Germany will also be useful.

JOHN SMITH MU

AS far as we know, Mr. Roosevelt is the first President who ever issued a formal Proclamation that citizens, who refuse to answer questions put by the census enumerators, are subject to fine and imprisonment. Citizens who decline to answer may be fined and jailed. Citizens who give incorrect, incomplete, or misleading answers are subject, on conviction, to heavier penalties.

But nowhere in his Proclamation does the President give us the text of the questions to be answered by every adult under penalty of the law.

The President assures us that all answers will be held in confidence. To what extent the President can give that guarantee remains to be seen. Only a few weeks ago, the President himself issued an executive order, turning over to the LaFollette Committee a mass of information given to the Government in strict confidence. Presumably the President has the same authority over the reports of the Census Bureau. Apart from that consideration, who can answer for the discretion of the enumerators, some 150,000 in number? Probably the majority of them will be political appointees, since according to report widely circulated and never denied, in selecting them the ordinary requirements of the civil-service system will be set aside.

The whole case turns, it seems to us, on the questions for which the Census Bureau will demand answers, under penalty.

If the Bureau can compel an American to

THE HANDY GUN

THERE is an old frontier saying that a handy gun makes shooting easy. The phrase has an application to the national defense plans about which we are hearing much. No American can oppose plans for an adequate defense, yet all will agree that precisely what is adequate is a question not easily answered. But the theory which seems to underlie much of the propaganda for national defense, that we can spend ourselves back to prosperity by turning our heavy industries into munition factories, is decidedly objectionable. That theory helped to get us into war in 1917.

TH MUST TELL ALL

give to an unknown enumerator, in whose discretion he can have no confidence whatever, information on matters that he considers to be his own exclusive business, the country should be informed of that fact, by Proclamation, if necessary, and at once. If the Bureau is authorized by the Act of Congress, to which the President refers, to ask any questions which it deems proper, then Congress should at once amend that Act.

Congress should immediately request the Bureau to submit to it all the questions it proposes to ask. Should the Bureau refuse, it is the duty of Congress to select the questions proper for the Decennial Census, as outlined in the Constitution, and to deprive the Bureau of all authority to alter or add to them.

The President correctly observes that "life and liberty in a free democracy entail a variety of cooperative actions for the common good." But it does not follow that "the prompt, complete, and accurate answering of all official inquiries addressed to each person by the census officials, should be regarded by him as one of the requirements of good citizenship." From this conclusion, we emphatically dissent.

We must first know, and quite definitely, what these inquiries are.

No Bureau or Department is authorized to ask questions at its discretion, and jail Americans who decline to answer them, or brand them as bad citizens. That can be done only by officials in Germany and the Soviet. We hope it cannot be done here.

THE HAAS PLAN

AT the meeting of the Bishops in 1939, a committee representing the hierarchy in this country expressed deep regret that the two great labor organizations had not been able to compose their differences, and work in harmony for the welfare of the wage-earner. For nearly three years, friends of organized labor have viewed this break in the labor front with deep concern. It has seemed to some that the differences under discussion have their root in the personal ambitions of John L. Lewis and William Green; or, if the hint of ambition seems unjust, in their fixed inability to agree upon a choice of means to reach an end which both champion.

On frequent occasions, each side has extended the olive branch of peace. Unfortunately, it has not been proffered gently. It has, rather, been hurled from a catapult, and now and then a barbed insult has been added to give the peace message point, weight and balance.

The last olive branch was extended by President Lewis, of the C.I.O. On closer examination, however, it appears that we may have here a real offer of peace.

Speaking at the bizarre convention of the Youth Congress in Washington, Mr. Lewis outlined a plan of union between the two organizations. He proposes that a joint convention be held at Washington on March 15 to vote on the resolution that all the units of the C.I.O. be recognized as part of the A. F. of L., that charters be granted by the A. F. of L. to these units, and that questions of detail in the relationship of the two organizations be taken up for later consideration "in such fashion as the joint convention may decide." President Green has met this proposal with the remark that it should have been made to the regularly constituted negotiating committees of the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O.

In our opinion, the A. F. of L. will blunder seriously if it rejects the Lewis overtures on a question of procedure. As far as we can see, what Mr. Lewis wants to do is to go back to the plan submitted in October, 1937, by Monsignor Francis J. Haas, of the Catholic University. The Haas plan provided for the creation of an autonomous division, within the A. F. of L., composed of C.I.O. affiliates, to be known as the C.I.O. department. Two committees, Daniel J. Tobin, Harry Bates, Matthew Woll and Thomas A. Rickert, for the A. F. of L., and John L. Lewis, Thomas Murray and Sidney Hillman, representing the C.I.O., actually met, but the discussions were soon terminated. President Green attributed the blame to the C.I.O. officials, and a bitter controversy followed. In the ensuing battle, the plan itself was forgotten.

These warring labor groups could do no better than to arrange for a meeting with Monsignor Haas. No one knows the unions and their difficult problems better. No one has more at heart the welfare of the wage-earner. Monsignor Haas can give both sides the guidance which each needs, and which neither has been getting for some years. He has no ax to grind, and the sole purpose of his

plan is to bring the two organizations together in a union that will enable them to work more effectively for the protection of the rights of labor.

The American labor movement has been so intent upon material issues that other needs more imperative have been obscured. Man cannot live on bread alone. The simple truth is that when men fail to appreciate spiritual values, and give them no place in their organizations, whether the society be a government or a labor union, conditions control the industrial and economic world that make it difficult to obtain bread. To say that if employers were ruled by the law of justice and charity, there would be no labor wars, is a truism, but it will not do to dismiss the truism as a pious futility. The world is bleak today because it has forgotten justice and charity.

Labor unions too must be governed by the same eternal law. Out of a desire to avoid "sectarian controversy" the American labor union has kept religion out of its constitution and its official statements, just as many a capitalist has fought shy of religion in order to oppress the wage-earner, while others have used it as a cloak for their malice. No group, political, economic, or social, can do much to make men happier, when it relies solely on a program which omits, or subordinates to other needs, man's fundamental need of religion.

It is not Monsignor Haas' purpose to set Messrs. Green and Lewis a daily lesson in the Little Catechism, much as they (and all of us) might profit by that study. But we feel sure that any plan designed by him will respect rights wherever they are found, and bring the two organizations together on the basis of justice and charity for all.

AT OUR DOORS

OUR sympathies go out today to the victims of oppression in Poland, and to the Finnish people who are leading a gallant fight against a brutal enemy. In many dioceses, our Bishops have asked us to contribute to funds for Polish relief, and all over the country drives are in progress to collect money for the civilian population of Finland. But as we join in these crusades of mercy, we must not forget an oppressed people at our very doors.

The Bishops and the Catholic people of Mexico are facing a persecution which, in some respects, will be more severe than any to which they have been subjected. An atheistic Government is threatening to issue decrees which will destroy the last vestiges of freedom of education. Everywhere the clergy and their people are subject to hampering restrictions, with threats that sterner measures will be enforced should they protest. In no part of Mexico is the Church free to carry on her mission.

For much of this persecution the American Government is responsible. One tyrannical gang after the other has been supported by Washington. We, individually, can do nothing to repair the past, but we can at least pray that Almighty God will strengthen the arm of the Mexican hierarchy in its fight against atheism in the school.

HE WAITS FOR US

IN the Gospel for tomorrow (Saint Luke, xi, 14-28) we read that "Jesus was casting out a devil, and the same was dumb." The name of the man into whom Satan had entered is not known, but if he is the same person of whom Saint Matthew writes (xii, 22) it would appear that the victim was not only dumb, but also blind, and probably deaf.

Apart from these physical afflictions, he was in a dreadful state. For he was possessed by the devil; that is, Almighty God had permitted Satan to control his body, his senses, and, thus in some degree, his will and understanding. Possession does not necessarily mean that the victim is guilty of grave sin, for God has permitted it in the case of saintly people. But it is a state so dreadful that the Church strives to free the possessed by a series of fervent prayers called exorcisms.

Possession, in the technical sense, is not so common as in the days of Our Lord, but it is still found, especially in pagan countries. Understanding the term in a wider sense, however, possession is all too common. A nation which, like Germany or Russia, wages bitter war upon the law of God, is ruled by men who may be said to be controlled by Satan. Men who go easily, even gladly, from sin to sin, and persevere in sin, are like slaves of Satan, for they execute his will faithfully. In fact, any man who does what he knows to be gravely sinful, by that act turns away from God and delivers himself to Satan. Should he die, a bond-slave of Satan, Satan will claim his own, and a slave he will remain for all eternity.

Admittedly, mortal sin and hell are not pleasant themes for meditation. But did not Our Lord Himself often propose them? Pleasant or not, they are useful and necessary, especially in an age in which literature, the theatre, and many subtle forms of propaganda, insist that there is no such thing as sin, and that hell does not exist. When Satan can persuade men that it is perfectly proper to indulge their evil passions, and that no accounting will be asked, or punishment exacted, no matter what they do, he has captured them. Unhappily, he succeeds in deluding many.

Through God's Grace, we can break the chains of sin. But we must not forget that final impenitence is a terrible reality. We can be forgiven, however numerous or grave our sins, if we turn to God and beg Him to help us. But God's Grace never forces us to turn. For those who give themselves to deliberate courses of sin, the danger is that they will be so enslaved by the meretricious charms of vice, that they will not wish to exchange sin for forgiveness. God offers them a place at His table, but they prefer the husks of swine. They are not forgiven, because they do not want to be forgiven.

The longer we put off our return to God, the more difficult will it be to come back to Him. When we hear His voice today, let us rise up at once and go back to our Father's house. He will not be harsh with us, for He waits for us, eager to give us the welcome that proves His infinite love for us poor sinners.

CORRESPONDENCE

BISHOPS' LETTER

EDITOR: No one could read the recent pronouncement of the Catholic Bishops on Church and Social Welfare without being struck by the almost complete agreement with the objectives of what is termed the "New Deal"—NRA, Social Security, Relief, as envisaged by such agencies as WPA, CWA and others; the Wages and Hours bill, the Wagner Act, the SEC, etc.

Anti-New Dealers have stormed and shrieked, and termed these measures "crackpot," Communistic, Socialistic and contrary to the "American Way," declaring erroneously that it was proposed to make over our whole social order.

Short shrift is made of such terms as Rugged Individualism, the Open Shop, coddling of the farmer and the wage earner and, in general, the entire case against the New Deal and President Roosevelt, in his noble effort to work out some slight modicum of social justice. In fact, the good Bishops go even farther than anything proposed by the New Deal, in their insistence that the wealth of the nation should be distributed in such a way that "the good of the whole community is safeguarded. . . . Workmen should be made secure against unemployment, sickness, accident, old age and death. Wages should provide both a living and a security," and "at present some form of Government subsidy seems a necessary part of the program."

It is a heartening thing to the average Catholic layman, I am sure, to read this pronouncement of the best brains of the Catholic Church and to know that in principle, at least, the valiant effort of the last eight years by the New Deal to improve our social order is recognized and appreciated. The program proposed will be continued in the party of Liberalism, and will be fought and opposed by the reactionaries who have steadfastly resisted every single effort to advance the public weal for the last fifty years.

East Orange, N. J.

C. E. B.

THE POLISH REPLY

EDITOR: Since in the February 3 issue of AMERICA you have expressed various views of the present war, and since this war originally was fought only between Germany and Poland, please allow me to present what, in my estimation, is the Polish view, with special reference to Professor Baerwald's article, *Hitlerism Is Not Germanism*.

The thesis that Hitlerism is not Germanism does not stand the test and is untenable. Hitlerism is not an abstract notion or a chimeric entity; it is a frightful reality, a living menace pulsating in the hearts of millions of Germans.

Hitlerism, in theory and in practice, is the incarnation of the *traditional* Prussian policies, of supreme egotism, of pretended racial superiority, of war madness, of hatred toward neighbors, and of Godlessness; it is the return to fiendish barbarism. Hitlerism was not "planted" on the Germans from without, but is a malignant growth from within. It was begotten by the Germans and nurtured by them until it grew up into a powerful national institution. It definitely is the expression and realization of the German soul—not in the sense that it expresses the mind of *all* the German people (for the Germans, like other racial groups, are comprised of units having their own specific culture and civilization), but surely of that element which today is preponderant and all-powerful. And that is Germanism; that is the German nation.

Nor are the Government and the nation two entirely distinct entities which can be separated at will. For it would be convenient, indeed, to separate one from the other, to divorce Hitlerism (more appropriately, Nazism) from Germanism in order to escape distasteful responsibility, while enjoying the fruits of the intrigues of either. Hitlerism is of the German people's own choice and volition, and therefore they must of necessity share all its achievements and responsibilities alike.

For years the Germans have been squandering all their resources and talent for the base purpose of war, hatred and destruction, while at the same time they would have us believe that they are a peace-loving nation left to the mercy of a hating world. While other countries have been ruthlessly devastated, theirs was always spared, and the German people suffered only those privations which their own Government brought upon them through incessant wars. At the same time the Germans were being imbued with the thought that theirs is a superior race, that they are called to dominate the world, that their neighbors are either barbarians or a decaying race, and that therefore they should be exterminated in order to promote their own nationalistic aims. Thus inoculated with base pride and haughty contempt, the Germans fail to see that they themselves are the cause of those seeming wrongs for which they so readily blame other nations and such justified measures as the Versailles Treaty. As a result of this they became a destructive and disruptive element in the civilization of the world.

In the present war the Germans have had no historical, geographic, ethnographic or any other right or claim to any portion of post-War Poland. Furthermore, there was no persecution of the German minority in Poland; to the contrary, Poland was far too lenient with those who, while enjoying her unbounded hospitality, plotted against her and treacherously stabbed her in the back at the out-

break or the present war. The world is witness to the fact that there was not the slightest provocation on the part of Poland for the present outbreak of hostilities. This responsibility must be shouldered entirely, in the judgment of future generations, by the war-mad Germans.

The basic motives for Germany's savage attack on Poland were: racial hatred, economic jealousy and religious antagonism. This latter factor, in view of the present desecrations of churches and the horrifying slaughter of the clergy, should command especial attention of Catholics the world over. For Poland always was a faithful daughter of Rome: *Polonia semper fidelis*. Poland never for a moment succumbed to the virus of Godlessness around her. Furthermore, she was the stronghold of Catholicism and the center from which Catholic culture radiated throughout the eastern and central Europe. Without Poland, and not Germany, there can be no Christian civilization in Eastern Europe.

Poland by her supreme sacrifice has opened the eyes of the world to the realization of the menace which is present-day Germany.

Sensing defeat, the Germans are already chanting the dirge of mercy. They are making a supreme attempt to disavow Hitlerism. That, however, cannot be done.

The Germans have no right to blame the world for the Frankenstein they themselves have brought to life. They have no right at this time to call for mercy, while they themselves at this very moment are merciless in their treatment of vanquished Poland, whose lifegiving blood they are trying to shed to the very last drop by their unheard of and methodic process of racial extermination through persecution, starvation, mass executions, and sterilization.

The Poles were willing to forgive and forget the injustices and wrongs of their age-long political extinction; what is more, they made every possible effort for mutual understanding and a peaceful adjustment of any existing differences. But I am afraid that the Germans, by their barbarous aggression and ceaseless atrocities, have created an abyss of hatred which for decades shall wreak its vengeance because of the unforgettable crimes which have been perpetrated on an otherwise peaceful people.

Let no one obtrude now the doctrine of charity, unless he truly understand it and himself be first to put it into practice. This is not a case of mere hatred, but of self-preservation and the right to be free and to conduct themselves like civilized human beings.

Nature has a way of dealing with all those who transgress any of her laws. The Germans rebelled against them; they shall have to face their punishment. I sympathize with those millions of Germans who have had no share in this truly demoniac plotting against our entire civilization, but unfortunately they shall have to suffer the curse begotten by sin, even as the children of Adam and Eve must forever bear the stigma of their protoparental disgrace.

As for Poland I hopefully cherish the words of the present Holy Father only recently spoken to a very prominent radio orator, the Very Reverend Justin Figas, to whom in a private audience His Holiness has said: "God, indeed, must be preparing for Poland a very auspicious future, since He demands of her such great sacrifices."

Athol Springs, N. Y.

A. M. BOCHENSKI, O.M.C.

CENSUS

EDITOR: If John Wiltbye intends seriously to object to the sort of Census that will be taken this year I think his attitude and reasons would be criticized by many, if not most, persons, Catholic or otherwise, who have a deep and special interest in one or more of our complicated social and economic problems. It seems almost to be laboring the obvious to state that accumulated factual data of the type to be yielded abundantly in the coming Census is indispensable for an accurate and full understanding of at least the quantitative aspects of our social problems. As a basis for intelligent social and economic action, and for correct judgments on matters pertaining to conditions and trends in American social economy, the decennial (and other) stocktakings are essential prerequisites.

Whether or not today's "omnibus" Census is unconstitutional can safely be left for the courts to decide! What the Fathers of the Constitution had in mind a century and a half ago, when they provided for an "enumeration," was appropriate in that day of simple pre-industrial economy and small population. But today?

Instead of heckling the Federal fact-finders as omnivorous bureaucrats hungrily seeking more power with which to deprive us of our liberties—instead of taking a petty and negative attitude as they prepare to accumulate basic data concerning the country's human and material resources, I think we Catholics should start indulging in some self-criticism for not being as well informed about our own Catholic population in this country as any student can become informed about the general American population simply by intelligently exploring the publications of the Census Bureau. Compared to what we know on such topics as the composition, movements, trends, economic and social status, rural-urban distribution, etc., of the American population, our specific knowledge about the Catholic segment in these particulars is deplorably sketchy.

Along these lines it might be suggested that the departments of social science in our Catholic colleges and universities concern themselves intensively with analyzing quantitatively, in accordance with established survey and statistical procedures, the Catholic population in selected areas. Improvement of basic census procedures parish by parish, diocese by diocese, would be a necessary first step, it would seem, toward furnishing us with a complete statistical report on the Church.

Kalamazoo, Mich.

J. J. BURNS

LITERATURE AND ARTS

TO ALICE MEYNELL: AFTER READING HER FREQUENTLY

DAVID GORDON

THE French have said everything, and one of the best things they have said is *L'art de ne pas tout dire*. In English literature, and, as far as I know, in the literature of the world, no one has so exquisitely practised the art of not saying all as Alice Meynell.

She is a compact of reticences and half-lights. She distils the most luscious harmonies out of nuances combined and, unless you give her an almost frenetic attention, you will miss her message. Giotto's grey tones portraying the Poverello among his sisters, the birds, come from the same Source; so do those little unnoticeable *arpeggios* that Johann Sebastian Bach loves to intrude archly in the midst of his grandest fugues; Verlaine is, of course, the poet who made this practice the heart of his *métier*—and most of all, the Psalms-in-Latin as we have them in the Roman Breviary are replete with such grey-gold sidelights on the personality of God.

I suppose Francis Thompson with his grandeurs and his ardors has made more friends for our holy Catholic Faith in the English-speaking world during the last two generations than any other writer. But it is my own guess that Alice can make better converts (though perhaps fewer) than Francis Thompson. It is exactly "friends"—as I have deliberately put it—that have often been our undoing. During "the late unpleasantness" in Spain our "friends" turned against us and—taking the social-service and worker-democracy Catholics with them—returned to the precincts where they ordainedly belong.

Such "friends of the Church" and such nominalistic Catholics will never find anything in Alice Meynell. There is not, throughout all her verse and prose, the slightest trace of "social consciousness" nor sympathy for the proletariat. And, as to the latter, how could there be? Since no such creature as the proletarian, the *homo economicus*, the *Massenmensch*, actually exists, Alice Meynell, a strong philosophic mind, could not write about him. This woman had brains and learning to go with it. I think myself that only one other woman Catholic writer (and she too a convert-Catholic)

has surpassed her in sheer intelligence: Madame Swetchine.

The qualities of things can sometimes be most graphically presented by reference to their extreme opposites, and I was going to make some reference to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt—but never mind. I shall confine myself to Alice Meynell.

Only a woman could have written these essays and poems, and the subtlety of these compositions is very definitely feminine. I do not mean that subtlety is a feminine quality: Henry James carried a sort of rotten-ripe subtlety to the deepest degree to which it has been carried in literature. Nor is Alice feminine in the slop-barrel manner of George Sand in youth; neither is she, a mother of eight children, motherly in the way that George Sand was in her better latter years. Alice Meynell has written of children and of flowers and of twilights in Italy—topics much profaned by repetition—in a manner all her own.

She attained this quintessential excellence at a terrible cost and at the price of a terrible blindness (she seems to have almost deliberately killed that eye of the soul which is the emotional side of Catholicism). I write this study to point out even-handedly the supreme triumph-in-letters which she achieved and the Great Lack which is the price she paid for this triumph. This shy Englishwoman is, in the depths of her, most reminiscent among all literary figures of the grandeur of the blinded Oedipus of Sophocles.

How shall I express this blindness—a blindness, mind you, amounting to spiritual grossness—of this subtlest of souls? Alice Meynell could understand the Saints, but she could not understand the martyrs: martyrdom through blood being so unesthetically bloody. She was a Catholic and she had to be a Catholic because it is only in the Church that the raucous reformed-drunk is not tolerated; yet, may God forgive her, she never obtruded her profound love of the Faith, because obtrusion is bad taste. She almost never mentions her Catholicism directly.

She lived and wrote in the very middle of the esthetical *fin-de-siècle*; and the *zeitgeist* caught her

and almost desiccated her. In the nineties of last century, Salvation-by-Art and the Benefits of Socialism to the "worker" and Emancipation for Women were so plausible that they deceived even the elect.

Alice Meynell, a soul of white-flower innocence, was taken in by Estheticism, Socialism and Woman Suffrage. Poor dear, she even forced herself to sit on a platform with Mrs. Pankhurst, in a desperate effort to do something for the cause of femininity. Alice died a holy death in the year 1922. She was just in time to miss seeing Socialism and Woman Suffrage in actual operation. God spared her the heartbreak of seeing ladies leaving their children to seek careers as publicity writers for lime-and-cement businesses and calling this "self-expression." She saw in her latter years the rottenness of Bloomsbury in London betraying the holy name of Beauty; but she died before she could see the "Social Gospel" in America betraying the holy name of Christian Charity for the sake of preaching socialistic legislation.

Such extreme and lovely Catholic innocence as this is the most fruitful of qualities in the creation of beauty. But it is the most dangerous of qualities too; for often, just because of its purity, it lends its strength unknowingly to support of the tentatives of Antichrist.

Alice Meynell harbored a frenzied hatred for ugliness, loudness and the male sex. Thus she was enabled to devote her God-given gift for words to the sly ironic defense of the subtle and the shadowy. She could see no virtue whatever in that great cleansing thing, humor; therefore she was all the better enabled to portray the faint footprints of wit. She could not, God be thanked, at all understand that God sometimes puts a broadsword into the hands of his crusader-saints; therefore she became a mistress in the understanding of the rapier. She felt so deeply for the Catholicism of the nunnery that she almost hated the Catholicism of the Inquisition.

Alice Meynell loved God profoundly, but she seems to have felt that the bleeding Jesus Christ on His Cross was no subject to be referred to directly by a gentlewoman. For this very reason, the unashamed rhapsody of Francis Thompson will live longer in literature and, for the same cause, the aphorisms of Coventry Patmore (whom Thompson called "the greatest mind of the century") are a more valuable glory to God and a more reasonable service to Him than has been given by any of the English converts to the Catholic Faith.

But just at this point it must be insisted that rareness, too, is one of the important qualities of literature by Catholics. And in this quality of rareness, Alice Meynell reigns the unapproachable queen. Who shall say that rareness is not something ultimately weighable in the balance with the literary quality of permanence itself? She is a vintage wine for connoisseurs.

Alice Meynell is the cultivator of one dear forsaken garden. It is by a process of ruthless limitation that she achieved this golden effect. It is by

a soldierlike seal set upon her lips that this imperishable sweetness was at last brought forth. It is by dint of her blindness of one eye that the other eye saw with such uncanny concentration the flight of the more elusive angels. There are passages in her essays which are so full of a holy literary perfume that one thanks Heaven that no believer in social statics and the rights of labor could possibly understand them. Listen to a paragraph such as the following:

One has the leisure of July for perceiving all the differences of the green of leaves. It is no longer a difference in degrees of maturity, for all the trees have darkened to their final tone and stand in their differences of character and not of mere date. Almost all the green is grave, not sad and not dull. It has a darkened and a dally color, in majestic but not obvious harmony with dark grey skies, and might look, to inconstant eyes, as prosaic after spring as eleven o'clock looks after dawn.

And, ah so often, in the poems of Alice Meynell, you will suddenly hit upon a single line set in the midst of a flawless but drab-seeming verse. And the beauty of this line will stay with you for years. Listen again!

Before this life began to be
The happy songs that wake in me
Woke long ago and far apart.
Heavily on this little heart
Presses this immortality.

Now this, of course, is literature definitely classifiable among the delicate and the nuanced; and, too, among the Esthetic. But the point of Alice Meynell is her difference—after all!—from her period.

What can there be about these subtly perfumed essays and poems which sets them apart from the productions of their contemporaries? What is it now that will make Alice Meynell important after all that *fadeur exquise* of her equally competent contemporaries, Stephane Mallarmé, the agnostic of Paris, and Arthur Schnitzler, the Jew of Vienna, have died forever?

It is indefeasibly that Catholic background which gives bone to this subtilized flesh. We know now that art-for-art's-sake turns rotten. The lovely surfaces of Jimmy Whistler's nocturnes are, despite their great competence, only surfaces. Surfaces are always at last tiring; and Estheticism displays, during the following generation, the true face behind the mask, which face is properly called debilitated sexuality.

But there is a tremendous difference between the exquisiteness of Alice Meynell and the gracious literary understress of Schnitzler. Behind the surface beauty of Alice there is the abiding structure of Catholic dogma and the love thereof. Whereas, underneath the arabesques of sentiment so deftly created by Schnitzler, there is Goethe's Werther in a further and final decadence, that Werther who *müde sich gedacht*.

That is why I venture to predict that the work of Alice Meynell will renew its youth like the eagle's; while the Christless corruption of her contemporaries such as Mallarmé and Schnitzler is already beginning to be distinctly oppressive to our nostrils.

BOOKS

A NASTY GRUDGE AFTER TWENTY YEARS

THE CONVENT. By Alyse Simpson. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. \$2.50

THIS is no lurid Maria Monk affair. This narrative has no scarlet passages of passionate sin, no flesh for flesh's sake, no crime, no tragedy, and absolutely no humor. It is just a dull, colorless account of a personal experience. And yet, because of publishers' blurbs and prejudiced reviewers, the book is capable of doing untold harm. On the dedicatory page, the author writes: "It is not any enmity to religion that speaks, but my memory of much suffering." The reviewers and the kluxers find in it, or add to it, an enmity to religion. The author inscribes in it her profound pity for herself, and her sentimental pity for those whom she conceives, wrongly, to be her fellow sufferers.

There is no great reason for anyone to read the book, except perhaps, Mothers Superior. They might learn whom not to receive and not to keep in the novitiate. Such a person would be one typified by the author, Alyse Simpson. Her story, faithfully synopsised, is as follows:

She was eighteen. She lived in a small Alpine village. John, who loved her she thought, seemed to forget her for a full year. She was once stage-struck, and once wanted to marry an Englishman. Because John failed her, she resolved on entering a cloistered nunnery, resolved on martyrdom, self-immolation. Besides, a nunnery would be infinitely sweet and beautiful. John did not come back. She would, therefore, be a saint. Alyse enters the nunnery. The nuns did not give her an ecstatic welcome. She liked neither the Superior nor the Mistress of Novices, nor most of the nuns. She woke up at two to keep vigil, she committed the frightful sin of eating an apple, she was not impressed by talk of carnal desires. They hung a picture of a Madonna and Child, perfectly scandalous because the child was not clothed. Most of the nuns worked hard, prayed, did not read, were tubercular, were insane, were fed bad food, faded rapidly, got thin, had visions, were afraid of the devil. Two nuns attracted her: one entered the convent because she loved a married man, who later committed suicide; the other entered because her future husband was killed. The three of them went swimming in an open pool. One nun escaped in the middle of the night. Alyse grew thin. She thought of John. In fact, she often thought of John. She had an instinct to flee from the convent. She was told she could leave any time. Alyse was weary. She knew that she could walk out any time she wished. "I knew it was a mean, cowardly thing to do," she relates, "deciding to sneak out of the convent by guile." She did it. After hiding in the chapel from ten to three, in the black night, she opened the door easily, and walked to the nearby town, where she caught the morning train home. No one pursued her. Alyse had been in the nunnery nearly two years before she made her midnight flight. Shortly afterward, she married John. Twenty years later, she visited the nunnery for a few days. During that time, the number of nuns had increased from about eighty to more than a hundred.

Such is the full content of the book. Alyse never had a reason for entering. Having entered, she never grasped the reason for anyone being a nun. Apparently, she never had a true spiritual thought. Of course, she suffered. But the door was always open to her. And now, she begs the world to weep with her over her sad and mournful pains of twenty years ago.

The poison of the book derives from the suggested

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A sermon by His Excellency JOHN F. O'HARA, C.S.C., D.C., the Auxiliary Bishop of the U. S. Army and Navy.

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generalizations. Nunneries beget tuberculosis, hysteria, neurasthenia and insanity; nunneries are unsanitary and serve bad and ill-balanced rations; are not happy places; have a deadening routine; produce early deaths. These are the ideas that the bigots of the reviewing columns of the newspapers and magazines seize upon. These are the charges that the anti-nunnery crusaders delight to expound. These are the lies that all anti-Catholics, and many non-Catholics, gulp down like a puppy bolting his chopped meat. The poor Alyse who suffered so much has our pity, but she did a nasty job because she had a nasty grudge, nursed for twenty years.

The antidote to the poison is an honest inquiry into the 10,649 convents and nunneries scattered throughout the United States; a heart to heart talk with ninety-eight per cent of the 165,210 nuns and Sisters in the United States, or anywhere else, in the world. Nunneries are spots of earthly paradise, with dark days of course, as in all things human. And nuns, with very rare exceptions, are the happiest beings in this vale of tears.

ADRIAN PEYTON

THE SUBLIMITY OF MARITAL UNION

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE. By Dr. Herbert Doms. Sheed and Ward. \$2.25

AFTER defending for a lifetime the sanctity of the marriage bond, many a priest asks himself if some of the difficulty he experiences does not arise from inadequate appreciation of the mystery of the Sacrament of Matrimony itself. Watch the reaction of a Catholic congregation to a full and careful explanation of the *mutuum adiutorium*, the spiritual aid and comfort given to one another by husband and wife in the struggle for the soul's salvation; obtain their comments upon such an explanation, and you discover that there are depths of Catholic doctrine known to past ages but little heeded by modern utilitarians.

We can thank, therefore, Dr. Doms for sounding theological depths as to the sublimity and spiritual fruitfulness of the marital union. "The marital two-in-oneness (*Zweieinigkeit*)," he says, "is something which far transcends any relationship of arbitrary form. It opens to human beings the door to a fulfilment which stirs the last depth of their personalities, a fulfilment which is natural but which nevertheless cannot be modified by man, for it is willed by God."

How the physical and the "meta-physical" or spiritual element of the marital union form one whole in a supernatural act based upon the mysterious complements ordained by nature is elaborated with detailed and explicit reference to sexual and biological factors; a little too explicit, possibly to be acceptable to many American Catholic readers. The author finds himself in contradiction with the teaching of Saint Thomas as to the "ends" or purpose of marriage. One regrets the translator's omission, on the plea of its being too technical, the chapter discussing this point.

Dr. Doms' work has been criticized both on doctrinal and on practical grounds; as by the Rev. R. Boigelot, S.J., in the *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* (Louvain) for January and May, 1939. Dr. Doms' reply, with Father Boigelot's rebuttal, may be found in the latter issue. I find that my own impressions, pro and con, were not unlike what later I read in Father Boigelot, with whom the reviewer in the *Osservatore Romano* coincides in freely awarding much credit to Dr. Doms for striking out boldly in this little explored field.

A legitimate fear arises as to the effect on pastoral ministration of the apparently subordinate part assigned to the child in considering the ends of matrimony, as compared with the primacy afforded to the personality needs of husband and wife. Dr. Doms claims to preserve the dignity of the child's part by using a fundamental

distinction. "We distinguish," he says, "the meaning [Sinn] from the purpose [Zweck] of marriage and maintain that the immediate purpose of the marriage ceremony and of the permanent legal bond is the realization of this meaning. In so doing, we vindicate those theologians who think that the highest and most important purpose of marriage is undivided community of life for man and woman."

This distinction, however, is plainer to the German phenomenological philosophers than to the Latin or Anglo-Saxon mind accustomed to the Thomistic categories. A fear remains that this lack of plainness may lead to a twisting in the popular mind of the Church's lofty doctrine into a supposed sanction of anti-family practices.

One may question the practical effect of stressing almost uniquely the beauty and glory of those aspects of matrimony which *completely* satisfy the demands of sex and spirit alike, as compared with the rather grim realism of most marriages and an ever-increasing part of all marriage. As time takes its toll in each life, a moral support is needed for marriage responsibilities which is more easily related to our familiar religious motives, one closer to the ideals of virginity as well as to the part allotted by the Church to the unmarried (from necessity or choice) in her economy.

This is but another way of saying that the satisfactory synthesis, for pastoral and for doctrinal purposes, is still to come. No one can blame the pioneer attempts for certain deficiencies, and Dr. Doms expressly disclaims any attempt at completeness. Rather they are a praiseworthy reminder of the great work that is yet to be done.

JOHN LAFARGE

OPINION THAT SIDES WITH THE VAST MAJORITY

COMMON SENSE NEUTRALITY. Edited by Paul Comly French. Hastings House. \$2

THERE are twenty-four contributors to this book, with Sumner Welles, Under-Secretary of State, contributing a final chapter on the recent meeting in Panama of the Foreign Ministers of the American Nations. The title is quite appropriate. It expresses the longing of the vast majority of the nation, according to one of the contributors, Mrs. Eleanor R. Roosevelt: "As I go around the country, if there is one thing that stands out, it is that the American people want peace; they don't want war."

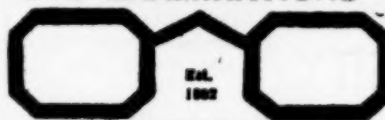
The members of this symposium arrive at the same conclusion by various and diversified roads of logic and feeling. Parenthetically, in this group there is no Dorothy Thompson, the stimulating commentator, no Henry C. Stimson, former Secretary of State, no Major General O'Ryan, with their thesis that we shall eventually go into war, so, why not now? Senator Borah fortunately is quoted at length from his masterly and last formal address to the Senate, against lifting the embargo on arms. The speech is a fitting epitaph to this great American, the Lion of Idaho.

Unfortunately, due to limitations of space, no doubt, Senator Johnson, of California, is not quoted. Surely Senator Borah would have chosen otherwise in the case of this fighting peer of so many Senatorial battles. The army is represented by Major General Smedley D. Butler; the American Legion by its National Commander, Raymond J. Kelly; Labor by John L. Lewis; educators by Mordecai M. Johnson, Negro President of Howard University; the Catholic Church by Bishop Sheil. As the editor puts it: "The opinions differ widely, except in the basic concept of peace for America."

A striking description of the totalitarianism sure to throttle our nation the instant Congress declares war is given by Elliott Roosevelt:

Before a single shot is fired, before a single trans-

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As a firm believer in this sentiment, this reviewer's conclusion from the present instructive volume is America, First Heal Thyself. There will be no time for war.

DANIEL M. O'CONNELL

BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

MEN IN OUR TIME. By Audax. Robert M. McBride and Co. \$2.50

WILL books in this new European war exert the influence that they did in the great conflict of 1914-1918? The publisher believes they will. This reviewer believes they will not—not if the authors are of the Audax school of writing. Audax is reputed to be "a prominent British political figure." If this be true, then the common people of Britain must toss about in their sleep o' nights and mutter rather pointed imprecations against the muddle-headed British political system in general and against Audax in particular.

Audax is glib. He has mastered an adequate number of parliamentary phrases either in Commons or in some respectable pub. He knows how to consult newspaper files and he has the average Cockney's grasp of international affairs. Audax probably supplemented his meager equipment with a bottle of sherry and wrote this dull, trashy book on a rainy night in a stuffy bachelor's flat out Soho way. Poor Britain! Poor Audax! Poor reader!

JOHN J. O'CONNOR

NOW THERE IS BEAUTY. By Sister M. Therese. The Macmillan Co. \$1.25

THIS book of poems is by a nun of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Divine Saviour. Some of the verses are good enough to have first appeared in the best periodicals. The poems are written by one who knows how to sing; they are delicate, feminine, graceful and holy.

The author divides her verses into little groups. *Now There is Beauty*, *You Give Me Sappho* and *Of Human Things* are mostly sonnets; *Of Death*, *Mary Sings*, *Commendo*, and *Nor Plato nor Aristotle* are of various verse forms. She is fond of the Dominicans, the Carmelites, the Religious of the Sacred Heart who come into her song. Her favorite poet is Sister M. Madeleva to whom she writes a sonnet. Here and there in her poems she gives off little, authentic echoes of Sister Madeleva's music, which is praise enough.

In reading this book, one may want very much the character portrayal of Walter de la Mare, and yearn for some of the brilliant sketching of detail as done by Father Hopkins; but one has to admit that Sister M. Therese has done her modest share of what she calls breaking the bread of beauty to the world.

THOMAS B. FEENEY

ONE MAN'S FIGHT FOR A BETTER NAVY. By Holden A. Evans. Dodd, Mead and Co. \$3.00

STARTLING is a weak word to describe this autobiography. We read admissions that our latest destroyers are top-heavy, our most recent heavy cruisers are faulty, our newest aircraft carriers are defective. We are inclined to allow our Navy Department margin for error. But enthusiasts who read this volume will be more inclined to condemn than to condone.

The author, not a writer of great skill, presents engrossing pages; not over modest in detailing his ac-

complishments, he uses apparent egotism as a powerful weapon. The stuff of his life, the anecdotes about naval men, the revelations of naval psychology contained in this volume would seem to justify its publication. These, as well as the raking fire he directs at the corps of officers, from plebes to Admirals, are but minor points to Mr. Evans.

His chief target is the inefficiency he has met and struggled with in our Navy Yards. Somewhat embittered by his defeat at the hands of a powerful bureaucracy and his subsequent resignation from the Navy, he spares not names, places, events. Declaring that public opinion alone can remedy the grievous faults he finds in our Navy, he presents his experiences to the public. His book, as an absorbing story of solitary struggle for a better Navy, is worth a reading; as a case against Naval inefficiency, it deserves a hearing. FRANCIS X. CURRAN

THE SPIRIT OF GREGORIAN CHANT. By Marie Pierik. McLaughlin and Reilly Co., Boston.

IT IS the author's belief that the student of Gregorian Chant will best attain its spirit by delving into its origin, its evolution and its place in the liturgy. A knowledge of this data is a prerequisite for its understanding and presentation. In the first chapter we are given a general survey of its Golden Age under such protagonists as Ambrose and Gregory, its deterioration, and finally its revival in our times by the painstaking efforts of the Solesmes monks and the *Motu Proprio* of Pius X.

There follows a rather technical dissertation on the elements of the Chant—its notation, modes, texts, melody and rhythm. The book concludes by showing the relation of ecclesiastical music to the liturgy and the consequent necessity of a truly spiritual repertory and presentation.

The entire work evidences a deep love for this ancient art and an extensive research into its history and norms. It abounds in quotations from many excellent sources which are conscientiously acknowledged. Translations are frequently clumsy. It is regrettable that an index was not compiled. Perhaps, certain sections might better have been presented in glossary form.

FORREST S. DONAHUE

ENCHANTING JENNY LIND. By Laura Benét. Dodd, Mead and Co. \$2.50

WHILE visiting in the country, not far from Stockholm, the four-year-old Jenny Lind became aware of the singing of a bird, and tried to imitate the sound. That day of spring time and song made such an impression on her baby mind, that the memory remained, and was to her the norm of peace and happiness. At the age of nine, she began her training in the Royal Theater School in Stockholm, for even then her child voice was pure and strong. She was a serious student and although plain in looks, except for her expressive eyes, she danced gracefully and thought acting was great fun.

Thus began the remarkable career by which she attained the ultimate in operatic and concert success in the great cities of Europe and America. She became the darling of Royalty and was often the recipient of Court honors. The young Queen Victoria was one among many who bestowed their royal approval and affection on Jenny, while Felix Mendelssohn and Hans Christian Anderson were numbered among the host of her devoted friends.

Laura Benét, herself a poet, is a sister of the distinguished Stephen Vincent and William Rose Benét. As in her earlier work, *The Boy Shelley*, this book makes an appeal to youth, for it is written in a most enthusiastic manner. Miss Benét has given in great detail the struggles and triumphs of the gifted Jenny during her early years, emphasizing the fine qualities of her lovable and deeply spiritual nature. The story closes after the "Swedish Nightingale" had made her celebrated tour of America, in 1851, under the spectacular management of the greatest of showmen, Phineas Taylor Barnum.

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MY DEAR CHILDREN. The reappearance of John Barrymore on the New York stage, after seventeen years of absence from it, should be an occasion of delight to his friends. It seems to be that sort of an occasion to Mr. Barrymore, and he is certainly making a Roman holiday of it. Let it be admitted, too, that large audiences are enjoying this Roman holiday, and that it is already announced, semi-officially, that Mr. Barrymore's new play, *My Dear Children*, written by Catherine Turney and Jerry Horwin, and produced at the Belasco Theatre by Aldrich and Myers, is "selling out" for weeks, even months, in advance.

But all this leaves Mr. Barrymore's army of friends perplexed and depressed. What they are thinking is that it is a far cry from Barrymore's presentation of the greatest Hamlet of our time, eighteen years ago, to his present exhibition of something very close to clowning in the watery little comedy that is his latest vehicle. He twists his still handsome features into knots. He interrupts the action of the play to utter confidential asides to audience and players. He interpolates new lines and new business during every performance. He winks and grimaces.

It is all a delight to that part of the audience which has no memories of him as one of the greatest of America's actors; it is not a Roman holiday to those who cherish their memories of his past performances in *Hamlet*, in *The Jest*, and even in *Peter Ibbetson*. He loved his art and the stage in those days. It would not have seemed possible to him to burlesque them.

Also, one cannot help suspecting that he is committing another crime. He is affecting the morale of his associates. During the second night performance of *My Dear Children* two young members of his company were so carried away by Mr. Barrymore's humor in extemporized lines that they were helpless with laughter and unable to utter their own lines. Or—and this is as plausible as the first suggestion—their own lines may have been so out of relationship to Mr. Barrymore's improvisations that the young players dared not utter them. They took refuge in semi-hysteria.

There are moments in the play—though not many—when Mr. Barrymore takes his rôle seriously and gives us a glimpse of what he was. The playwrights, it is true, do not often give him such opportunities; but there are times when he has the chance to make the tepid little comedy blaze into temporary life. He does not take it. Almost from start to finish he is exhibiting John Barrymore in half a dozen different moods—and never in the mood for serious effort. It is interesting to see him do this, but it is not acting; it is not art; and it is not the Barrymore who in the past gave so many of us some of our best hours in the American theatre.

The play, as I have said, is a weakling. The company, working under many disadvantages, is a brave young band, seemingly devoted to its erratic leader, and doing its best for him and its public. The star impersonates an actor on a holiday in Switzerland. Doris Dudley, Patricia Waters and Lois Hall are excellent as his three daughters, when Mr. Barrymore gives them a chance to put their minds on their work. Usually the mind of every member of the company is obviously on him. Tala Birell has one or two real moments of acting, and Arnold Korff, Kenneth Treseder and Philip Reed make the best of shadowy rôles.

Mr. Barrymore carried his associates through a nine months' engagement in Chicago, just before they came to New York. Quite possibly he can carry them here as long or longer. Almost anything can happen on the stage of the Belasco these nights, and New York seems full of theatre-goers avid to see a great actor play ducks and drakes with a great gift.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

FILMS

PINOCCHIO. There is little originality in hailing Walt Disney as a genius after the success of *Snow White*; but with this brilliant addition to pure entertainment, it becomes necessary to pay him the further compliment of consistency. There is a noticeable growth in technical skill in Pinocchio's odyssey, and the story has even more fundamental significance. The puppet who fulfills his kindly creator's desire for a son by coming alive is boyishly perverse and requires the full-time care of an eloquent conscience. Even then he falls in with bad company, joining a puppet show and taking a perilous sojourn on Pleasure Island. The characters of the tale have been endowed with that delightful humanity which makes distinctions between persons and animals academic, and Gepetto, the woodcarver, Cleo, the fish, Jimmy Cricket, the conscience, and J. Worthington Foulfellow, the personification of villainy, suggest but do not exhaust Disney's incredible range of whimsey. There is color, humor and sentimental warmth in this film which will, collectively, defy the cynic's ban or the sophisticate's sneer. *Pinocchio* should prove a tower of strength to those abused "escapists" who insist that human nature is the stuff of drama rather than particularized social and political crises, and may help to explain why *Disney* is *universally applauded* while the social significance epics are not even accepted nationally. (RKO)

NORTHWEST PASSAGE. Kenneth Roberts' robust novel of Colonial times has been transferred to the screen not only undiluted by Hollywood improvisations but heightened and given a final historical impact by the careful camera. Technicolor takes on a dramatic value among the stern beauties of the wilderness, emphasizing the paradoxical character of the adventures described. King Vidor has managed whole passages with fine detachment, and the obviously fictional elements in the story are properly subordinated to reconstructed fact. The plot concerns Major Rogers' punitive expedition against the savagely hostile Indians of St. Francis, and the climax of that trek is presented with perhaps too much vigor for the squeamish spectator. The struggle back to Fort Wentworth is accomplished against even greater odds, but the sought-for northwest passage had been found. Spencer Tracy's portrait of Rogers is flawless, and Robert Young, as a venturesome painter, and Walter Brennan, a typical woodsman, are strong support. This is *recommended highly for the family's education and entertainment.* (MGM)

BROADWAY MELODY OF 1940. There is a more than usually equitable blend of story and musical sequences in this polished production and it is happily held to a minimum of those extravagances of plot and props which made screen musicals synonymous with sumptuous boredom. Norman Taurog's direction makes proper allowance for comedy moments and story development amid the remarkable dancing of Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell and George Murphy. Astaire is the victim of a mistake which sends his partner up the Broadway scale on his merits but the error is corrected in due time. Frank Morgan, Florence Rice and Ian Hunter fill out a good cast in a worthwhile *amusement for adults.* (MGM)

SIDEWALKS OF LONDON. There is more exploitation value than solid entertainment in this two-year-old English film. The story by Clemence Dane depends more on atmosphere than action, relating the rise of a sidewalk entertainer to the stages of Piccadilly. Tim Whelan's direction gives full rein to Charles Laughton's virtuosity and some interest attaches to his now notable leading lady, Vivian Leigh. Both are effective independently of the *adult story.* (Paramount) THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

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EVENTS

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IF other countries were like the United States, we would be regaled with dispatches somewhat as follows. . . . Great Britain. Roads leading to London were reported congested by taxpayers marching toward the capital to protest the new budget. . . . The Lord Mayor of London ordered all policemen to fill in a questionnaire inquiring whether they belonged to the Masons, whether their sons were affiliated with the Boy Scouts, their daughters with the Campfire Girls. Policemen must be neutral, the Lord Mayor said. . . . The House of Commons yesterday approved large loans for Borneo, Guatemala, Siam, Monaco, Andorra and other nations. Bigger handouts for all foreign countries were demanded by the Cabinet. One speaker who asserted some of the money should be kept at home was booed and hissed. . . . The Duke of Windsor announced he would not try for another term. . . . Anthony Eden was selected as the best-dressed man; Prime Minister Chamberlain as the most graceful umbrella-carrier. . . . The Cabinet announced it would buy all the gold and silver in the world at advanced prices. The gold and silver will be dumped in a coal mine in Wales, the announcement revealed. . . . Queen Elizabeth left London yesterday on a lecture tour. At Aldershot she will address soldiers on the topic: "Proper Strategy at the Western Front"; at Birmingham she will speak to parents on the subject: "How to Raise Your Children." In Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, the Queen's topic will be: "Whither Youth?" . . . France. Communist fellow travelers holding key positions in the Government last night turned out in numbers to attend the annual banquet of the Fellow Travelers Government Workers Association. . . . Premier Daladier sharply rebuked the Duys Committee which is engaged in disclosing un-French activities. . . . Madame Daladier, wife of the Premier, announced the subjects to be included in her forthcoming lecture tour. Her talks this year will cover only the educational, sociological, psychological, theological, philosophical, home-problem, youth-problem fields. . . . Italy and the Balkans. Mrs. Mussolini launched her Winter lecture schedule. In Hungary, Mrs. Horthy, wife of the Regent, began talking. In Turkey, Mrs. Saracoglu, wife of the Foreign Minister, delivered her first address of the year on the topic: "How to Prevent Earthquakes." . . . Russia. Mr. Stalin announced he would take another term. . . . Mr. Stalin was awarded the palm as the best-dressed man in Moscow. He also won in a competition to decide which Russian wore the best caps. . . . The Mayor of Moscow issued a questionnaire to ascertain whether policemen, firemen, garbage collectors and street-sweepers belong to the Odd Fellows or the Knights of Pythias. . . . M. Molotov announced he would support another term for Mr. Stalin. . . . In a mustache contest, Mr. Stalin's mustache was the winner. . . . Talk of a war with Finland continued, despite the Kremlin's announcement that there would be no war with the Finns. . . . Moscow's housing capacity was taxed to its limit by the throng attending the Russian Youth Congress. Mrs. Stalin housed twenty delegates in the Kremlin, and urged Mrs. Kaganovitch, Mrs. Offsky, Mrs. Molotov and other official ladies to put up others. Standing on top of Lenin's tomb in Red Square, Mrs. Stalin addressed the youths. The action of a small minority in attempting to have the gathering denounce the theft of American-owned properties by the Mexican Government threw the Youth Congress into an uproar. Archibaldsky Roosoff introduced the resolution. Mrs. Stalin told the youths not to pass the Archibaldsky resolution unless they believed in it. The majority of the youths favored the Mexican action. . . . Mrs. Stalin left for Siberia to lecture there.

THE PARADER